



Support and friendship  
for families

## Home-Start Dover District Strategic Plan 2011-2013

# Supporting families



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## 1. Executive Summary

Welcome to Home-Start Dover District's Strategic Plan 2011 - 2013.

This Strategic Plan sets out the main aims that the Directors/Trustees want to achieve over the next three years to consolidate and develop the Home-Start Dover District service, whilst staying true to our core service of supporting families in their own homes with volunteers.

In developing this Strategic Plan we have taken into consideration the external environment as well as present and new government initiatives; e.g. The Big Society, whilst simultaneously reviewing Home-Start Dover District's current services. As part of this process we have sought the views of our stakeholders, from which our aims have been developed.

We want to build on and extend our well-proven track record of working in partnership with statutory, voluntary and community organisations to provide innovative services that meet the needs of the community. Home-Start Dover District has an excellent record of supporting families throughout the Dover District area since 1995.

Our multi-disciplinary management committee is drawn from members of the community, parents, volunteer representatives and statutory advisors who bring a wealth of experience to the organisation. We have an incredibly dedicated and very experienced staff team and everyone within the organisation is totally committed to achieving this Strategic Plan.

We will monitor our progress through our:

- Monitoring, Evaluation System Home-Start, known as (MESH)
- Annual Vision Day
- Home-Start Quality Assurance System.

We hope that everyone who reads this Strategic Plan will find it interesting and informative, but would really welcome your comments on ways we could improve both the plan and our service. Our address is on the back cover.

Georj Donaldson  
Chairperson  
June 2011.



## 2. Introduction



### Our Core Belief:

Home-Start Dover District believes that children need a happy and secure childhood and that parents play a key role in giving their children a good start in life and helping them achieve their full potential.



### Our Mission:

Home-Start Dover District offers support; friendship and practical help to parents with young children.

Home-Start Dover District offers a unique service, recruiting and training volunteers – who have parenting experience – to visit families at home who have at least one child under five, to offer informal, friendly and confidential support.

In addition to this, Home-Start Dover District offers services including Family Groups and training courses, to meet locally identified needs.

To help give children the best possible start in life, Home-Start Dover District supports parents to grow in confidence, strengthen their relationships with children and widen their links with the local community.





### Our Vision:

Home-Start Dover District wants to see a society in which every parent has the support they need to give their children the best possible start in life.



### Our Values:

Home-Start Dover District's values are the principles that Home-Start holds most dear and through which we work:

- |               |                |            |             |
|---------------|----------------|------------|-------------|
| Supportive    | Non-judgmental | Caring     | Partnership |
| Warmth        | Trusting       | Respectful | Friendly    |
| Genuine       | A Gift of Time | Natural    | Empathetic  |
| Understanding | Equal          |            |             |



### 3. Background

Home-Start Dover District is a Registered Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee.

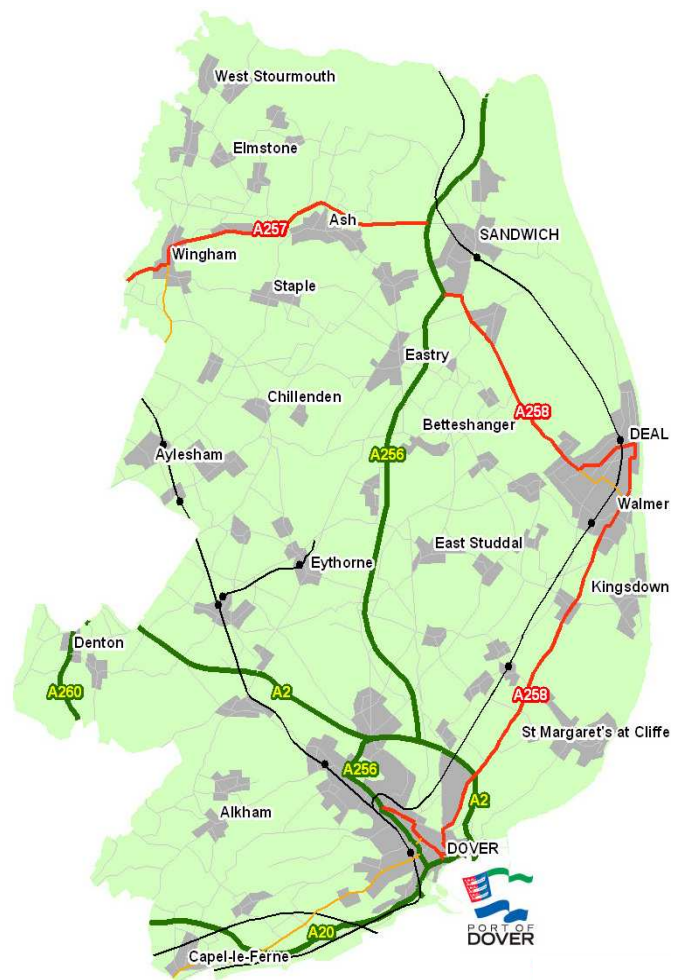
Since the scheme's inception in 1995 when we employed two staff and had an annual turn-over of £31,000, we have expanded the scheme and now employ twelve staff with an annual turn over of £272,805 in the 2009/10 financial year.

The number of families supported has steadily grown over the years and services have expanded in response to local need. In the 2009/10 year Home-Start Dover District supported 161 families and 357 children, whilst our seven Community Support Workers who are seconded to Dover, Deal & Sandwich Children's Centres, made between 1,000 and 2,000 contacts/home visits to the 4,200 families registered with the Children's Centres.

During 2010 Home-Start Dover District held an average waiting list of 16 families wanting our support and these families would have to wait up to three months for a volunteer. Sadly 21 families who wanted our support, did not receive any support due to lack of resources.

The scheme covers the same geographical area as the Local Authority Dover District Council, Kent County Council Social Services and the Local Children's Trust Board. The Eastern & Coastal Kent NHS Primary Care Trust (PCT) covers a larger geographical area including our district. PCT's are being replaced by GP Consortia and the boundaries have yet to be agreed, but could cover both Shepway and Dover District Council areas.

The Local Authority area, also referred to as "White Cliffs Country," covers approximately 121 square miles and is home to the busiest European ferry port in the country and Dover is often referred to as "The Gateway to Britain."



<b>% Population</b>	<b>Dover</b>	<b>Kent</b>
Total Population	106,100	1,665,900
CYP (up to 15 years)	18% (19,600)	19% (324,300)
CYP ( 16 - 24 years)	10% (10,800)	11% (187,500)
% Children in Poverty	19.4%	17.3%
Lone Parent Households	11.9%	10.3%
Residents with no car	18.5%	14.6%
In rural areas:	10.8%	8.2%
In urban areas:	22.6%	17.1%
<b>% District School Population</b>		
Number of KCC pupils	15,982	212,757
Boys	51.3% (8,194)	51% (108,474)
Girls	48.7% (7,788)	49% (104,283)
Children with SEN	26.7% (4,262)	25.6% (54,561)
Eligible for Free School Meals	14% (2,231)	12% (25,619)
Black and Ethnic Minority Children	12.2% (1,948)	13.9% (29,660)
English as an Additional Language	4.8% (772)	6.3% (13,394)
<b>% Kent LAC/ UASC Population</b>		
LAC (Kent only)	6.2% (81)	1,303
LAC (All)	5.8% (156)	2,680
UASC	0.8% (2)	238

Despite its location in the prosperous South East Region, Dover District contains pockets of the most deprived areas in the Country. Dover District is ranked the fifth most deprived district in Kent, based on a number of indices.

The following data has been taken from sources provided by Kent County Council, Office for National Statistics, Department for Work and Pensions, and Dover District Council records.

	<b>Dover District numbers</b>	<b>Dover District percentage</b>	<b>South East percentage</b>
<b>Population</b>	106,900		
<b>Working age population</b>	61,500	57.6%	61.1%
<b>Unemployed (July 2010)</b>	2045	3.2%	2.4%
<b>Claim key out of work benefits (i) (May 2009)</b>	8160	13.3%	9.4%
<b>Have a limiting long term illness</b>	21874	20.5%	15.5%
<b>Claimed a health related benefit (2007/8)</b>	10,170	9.5%	unknown
<b>Number of Households</b>	44,314		3,287,489
<b>Households claiming Housing benefit (2007/8)</b>	7125	16%	12.3%
<b>Households claiming Council Tax benefit (2007/8)</b>	9219	21%	14.8%
<b>Estimated number of Households who do not have access to a bank account</b>	4431	10%	10% (Kent figure)
<b>BME Population (ii)</b>	3800	3.6%	7.4%
<b>Households living in fuel poverty</b>	2883	6.5%	5.7%
	<b>Dover District</b>	<b>Kent</b>	<b>South East</b>
<b>Average weekly earnings</b>	£455.70	£507.90	£527.30

**Key:**

(i) *Out-of-work benefits groups include: job seekers, incapacity benefits, lone parents and others on income related benefits.*

*Note:% is a proportion of resident working age people.*

(ii) *Definition of the BME population:*

*The Black Minority Ethnic (BME) population is defined as all ethnic groups excluding White British, White Irish and White Other.*

## 4. Current Approach and Outputs

The Home-Start Dover District Board of Trustees and Directors are legally and financially responsible for setting the strategic direction of the scheme and employ the staff. The Scheme Manager is responsible for the day-to-day management of the scheme and additional services (see Organisational Structure - appendix vii).

Home-Start Dover District offers one-to-one, personalised support for parents under stress, with at least one child under five; reaching out to families at risk of social exclusion, including those who find it difficult to engage with other services.


Home-Start Dover District places trained volunteers, who are normally parents themselves, alongside parents who need support. Support is tailored to the individual needs of each family, with great emphasis placed on the careful matching of a volunteer to a family. Support is provided for as long as the family needs it, week, months or years – but does not continue beyond the youngest child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Volunteers are managed and supervised by trained and highly motivated staff. Home-Start Dover District in turn is supported by Home-Start UK, so is a local community resource with all the benefits of a strong national organisation.

### **What Home-Start brings to the community:**

- Outreach to families: home visiting and other family support services.
- True partnership working and local expertise to enhance support for families.
- Trustees: local people selected, trained and guided to run a local service.
- Volunteers: local parents selected, trained and supervised to provide one-to-one support to other local parents.
- Added value: local and other funding and resources.

### **What we do:**

- Provide tailored, personalised support to families, in their own homes and in groups: – other adults who care!
  - Encourage wider social and support networks and opportunities for increased engagement in community life.
  - Offer choices for parents and their children and opportunities for their voices to be heard.
  - Offer consistent adult role models for parents and their children.
  - Promote active citizenship, by involving local people in planning and provision.
  - Ensure consistent, high quality service through monitoring and quality assurance.
- 

**The difference we can make:**

- Families develop improved coping strategies and parents become more confident.
- Parents and children feel less marginalized and excluded.
- Families make better use of local services, are less isolated and have wider horizons.
- Children have fun and opportunities to enjoy new experiences.
- Stronger parent - child relationships.
- Happier safer homes, happier safer children.
- Individual volunteers encouraged and supported into training and employment.
- Increased community capacity: positive outcomes achieved by local people for local people.

In addition to the above 'core service' Home-Start Dover District also:

- Operates three Home-Start Dover District Family Groups.
- Employs an Outreach Team of seven Community Support Workers who are seconded to Dover, Deal & Sandwich Children's Centres.
- Operates and administers an Early Years Fund.
- Provides financial administration/accountancy for the Young & Pregnant Support (YAPS) & Teens With Tots groups.

Home-Start Dover District also has an excellent track record of forming and working in effective and productive partnerships with statutory, voluntary and community agencies.



## 5. The Wider Context and Future Trends

**Lord Laming's** report into the tragic death of Victoria Climbié (2003) prompted the then Labour Government to introduce the **Every Child Matters** outcomes for children, and all of Home-Start's services achieve or complement these outcomes. This was followed by **The Children Act (2004)** and more recently **Working Together to Safeguard Children**, the guide to inter-agency working, with roles and responsibilities. Home-Start has incorporated all the above changes to policy and practice into our own policies, working practices and procedures.

Home-Start Dover District has been an integral partner in developing and maintaining Dover, Deal & Sandwich Children's Centres and providing outreach support to families. The contract also provides some financial security for the scheme by charging a management fee. The future of this service is uncertain at this time, as is the Coalition Government's future funding of Children's Centres.

Kent County Council (KCC) faces a shortfall of £340 million over the next four years and it is not known how this will affect our current funding. KCC will also move towards a tendering & procurement process to award future funding and Home-Start Dover District already has experience of this process.

In this constantly changing environment it is difficult to plan for the future and develop the necessary relationships with the people and organisations that will be driving this change. Our resources are limited and we may have to make more resources available to meet future trends.

Home-Start Dover District certainly is well placed to take advantage of any opportunities that arise from the Coalition Government's 'Big Society' agenda to build a stronger Civil Society. We will continue to follow these initiatives closely to identify opportunities that can provide long-term funding streams and the stability and continuity that is essential for long-term sustainability.

Home-Start Dover District is committed to The Compact, which is an agreement between the Coalition Government and civil society organisations (CSOs) promoting effective working for the benefit of communities.

Home-Start schemes in Kent are also investigating all opportunities the Localism Bill might provide.



Stakeholders, working in two groups at our 2010 Vision Day, were asked to identify Home-Start Dover District's top five Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). The results of which are shown below:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good, experienced team (team work) &amp; leadership.</li> <li>• Well-proven track record of good partnership working.</li> <li>• Statistical evidence to prove we regularly exceed targets.</li> <li>• Seen as innovative, flexible, versatile, approachable and pro-active in our approach to families, stakeholders and our work.</li> <li>• National structure.</li> <li>• Quality Assurance.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of secure funding.</li> <li>• Work overload.</li> <li>• Lack of time to fundraise.</li> <li>• Seen as a small charity by some organisations / funders.</li> <li>• Home-Start UK not recognizing the value of Family Groups.</li> <li>• Marketing ourselves.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Services need Home-Start, especially since KCC's Ofsted report.</li> <li>• Working even closer with Children's Centres, to pool resources and develop additional partnership working.</li> <li>• Fundraising - to apply for funding as a charity.</li> <li>• Expansion (volunteers &amp; staff).</li> <li>• Offer the Preparation Course as accredited training for volunteers.</li> <li>• Attract younger volunteers as a route to employment.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial insecurity.</li> <li>• Closure of scheme.</li> <li>• Redundancies, especially the loss of key personnel (Scheme Manager).</li> <li>• Reduction of services.</li> <li>• Changes in Government policy.</li> <li>• Competition from other charities / organisations.</li> <li>• Social Services' Ofsted inspection.</li> </ul>

We believe Home-Start Dover District is ideally placed and ready to respond to any future changes in trends and to seize the opportunities this will provide.

## **6. Development Plan**

Home-Start Dover District's long-term strategy has always been to identify new trends and seek long-term, ongoing and secure funding. We need to avoid a 'boom and bust' scenario that would be detrimental to our services, staff morale and ultimate sustainability.

Home-Start Dover District is totally committed to our core service of home visiting and will stay true to the Home-Start ethos, but we will also seek to provide additional services for the local community to meet their needs and work in partnership with other voluntary, community and statutory agencies and new initiatives.

We have built up a wealth of experience through our fifteen years of support to over a thousand very different families. Our staff have developed their natural skills, experience and knowledge providing caring, accepting support to families.

Therefore the scheme's main direction over the next three years will be:

### **1. Consolidation:**

It is essential we consolidate our current services but we need to improve our monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of our services. We need to prove the outcomes for families to our funders and our new Monitoring, Evaluation System Home-Start (MESH) will provide this information. We need to work more closely with our partners, funders and stakeholders to prove the benefits of Home-Start and show how we can help achieve their outcomes for families. We also need to build a relationship with the new fund holding GP Consortium.

### **2. New Ways of Working:**

Home-Start Dover District has always been innovative, but in this current economic climate we need to explore different ways to work even more effectively and efficiently, sharing resources, considering mergers, new partnerships and collaboration with other organisations. All options should be considered.

### **3. Fundraising:**

A greater emphasis is needed to identify and then apply for the scarce funding that may be available. We have formed a Fundraising Sub Group to investigate all possibilities.

### **4. Publicity:**

Previously we have not been proactive in celebrating our successes, and publicity is seen as essential to promote the work of Home-Start Dover District to our current and potential funders. We need to raise awareness of our service to compete with other agencies seeking scarce resources.

## 7. Strategic Aims

Key Strategic Aim:	Specific Objectives:
<p><b>1. Consolidation.</b></p>	<p>1.1 Continued partnership working with Dover, Deal &amp; Sandwich Children's Centres.</p> <p>1.2 Improved links with Social Services &amp; Health, starting with an urgent meeting to discuss future commissioning of Home-Start services.</p> <p>1.3 Produce a portfolio of evidence of outcomes for funders (including photographs and press releases).</p> <p>1.4 Develop links with and promote Home-Start to the new GP Consortium.</p> <p>1.5 Maintain current services.</p>
<p><b>2. New Ways of Working.</b></p>	<p>2.1 Look at improved ways of incorporating the statistics of the Children's Centres' Community Support Workers with those of Home-Start.</p> <p>2.2 Propose pooling resources to provide improved support for families to the Dover, Deal &amp; Sandwich Children's Centres Advisory Board.</p> <p>2.3 Investigate shared working with other Home-Start schemes.</p> <p>2.4 Explore the possibility of volunteers / management committee members becoming more involved with fundraising / meetings and networking.</p> <p>2.5 Look at providing accredited training for volunteers and any potential funding opportunities this could create.</p>

<b>3. Fundraising.</b>	<b>3.1 Find new ways of selling ourselves to funders.</b> <b>3.2 Work in partnership with other Home-Start schemes to recruit a joint Fundraiser, to raise funding for schemes in Kent.</b> <b>3.3 Fundraise to support our 'Core' funding.</b> <b>3.4 Lobby Home-Start UK to approach K.P.M.G. accountancy firm re sponsorship / funding of Home-Start schemes.</b> <b>3.5 Identify and apply for long-term, secure funding for our Family Groups.</b>
<b>4. Publicity.</b>	<b>4.1 Use every opportunity to celebrate our successes and other publicity through press releases, doctors' surgeries, parish hall notice boards, pre-schools etc, to promote Home-Start.</b> <b>4.2 Propose and hold a Home-Start National Week.</b>

## 8. Resource Implications

To meet the aims of this Strategic Plan Home-Start will have to actively approach new funding streams through tendering, grant applications and / or re-negotiate existing funding. This will increase the Scheme Manager's workload and if successful there will be an ongoing increased management responsibility.

The Scheme Manager's position may need to become a purely managerial role and the current requirement to support families and supervise volunteers may need to be transferred to a new Family Support Worker. The Scheme Manager's post will then need to be funded by a system of full cost recovery.

Existing funding:

- Social Services / Primary Care Trust - joint finance
- Dover, Deal & Sandwich Children's Centres

Potential sources of funding have been identified as:

- Statutory funding through: grants, Service Level Agreements & tendering for contracts. We will need to concentrate on obtaining funding from the new GP Consortia
- Charitable Trust i.e. Children in Need, Comic Relief, The Volant Trust & The Big Lottery
- Corporate Business sponsorship
- Payroll giving and Gift Aid
- Legacies
- Social Enterprise
- Direct Mail drops
- A 'Friends Group' to raise funds through quiz nights, raffles, street collections etc

Please see appendix v for budgets and financial projections.

