

HOME START

Lorn

Home-Start Lorn Scheme Newsletter July 2025

Home is where we start from
across Oban, Lorn & the islands.



Since April this year we have supported.....

35

Families

**supported via
1-2-1 support**

49

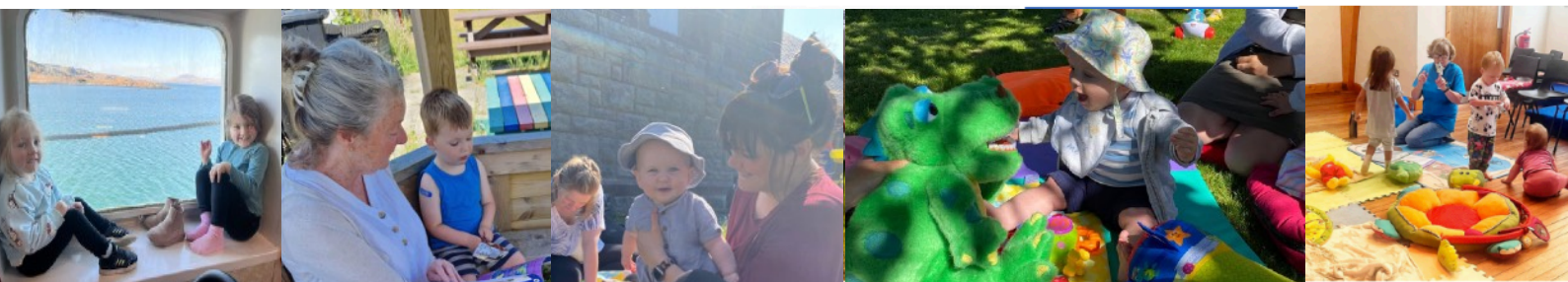
Children

**supported via
1-2-1 support**

608

Parents

**supported via
group activities**



Summer News 2025....



Manager's Welcome

Welcome to Our Third Quarterly Newsletter for 2025! As always, we are thrilled to share another exciting and busy period filled with social visitors and external training.

Throughout the past quarter, we have focused on our ongoing **incredible group work**, hosted a **Royal visit**, and welcomed **three new volunteers** who have signed up for our upcoming preparation course. Our key priorities have been around continued strategic planning, assessing and mapping local wants and needs, and ensuring success across our organisation. We've also enjoyed a period of developing both new and existing professional relationships within the Home-Start UK network and our local health and social work partnerships.



Groups update - from Kelly

Groups are going really well. Family Centre groups have been **fully booked** every single week since we opened. We also have a waitlist most weeks which shows how popular they are but we also realise that this isn't ideal for families who can't get booked in so are adapting to try and address that.



It is luckily different families each week on the waitlist so most do get in to at least one

group. We have added **trial drop-in sessions** to the group timetable which will hopefully help with the waitlist and give **everyone** the chance to be included. *This will be on a Monday 10-2pm and run between staff and volunteers.*



Contact Kelly for more info: kelly@homestartlorn.org.uk

Groups Include....

Messy Play Session (Once a month on a Monday at Dunbeg) Always full with around 15 families on each occasion.

Tuesday's - Hope Kitchen - We had a meeting to discuss alternatives as attendance is currently quite low for this group. We will be purchasing Dunollie Castle passes which will be our new Tuesday outdoor group from next month (July). We will have exciting access to the grounds/café and castle.

Baby Massage – We started a new block this quarter, with 8 families attending each session, including a dad!



Tea and Toys – Every Thursday, one week 10.30am and the following week 1pm to try and accommodate everyone. It's always fully booked and feedback has been great.

Bumps and Babies – Friday's. This has been a really successful group and really good for pregnant mums to share stories and experiences and also for new mums to meet and socialise. It's also wonderfully diverse with a great variety of families and ages.

We have had 8 new families register for groups through word of mouth alone in the past couple of months, 2 are pregnant mums - one has serious health conditions and was anxious about coming along but is now attending baby massage which we have adapted for her. In addition, we have also had a dad sign up, who is most welcome.

With the **new dad** coming along to a group, it was a great chance to get some input and have a good chat about what his opinions are on dads groups and how he we could get dads through the door and any ideas he might have.



From June, I will trial 2 groups at different times and days where it'll be encouraged **to bring dads/male carers along**, this way they can feel comfortable with mum being there to start with, get to know the space and have a chance to meet other dads. We will review this with the hope to start a dads only group once a month.

Kerry the Community Nursery Nurse came along to our Thursday group to offer weigh-ins for the

babies. We had a wonderful time and she hopes to come once a month moving forward.



Contact Kelly for more info: kelly@homestartlorn.org.uk



Mulling over Mull!

Royal Visit

On Tuesday the 29th of April, staff and families of Home-Start Lorn had the honour of meeting the Prince and Princess of Wales as they carried out a series of engagements in Tobermory on Mull.



The Royal Foundation, Their Royal Highnesses' charity, announced a partnership to fund renovations in the Aros Hall in Tobermory - a space we use on a regular basis for our groups on the island. In recent weeks, we have been working with the Royal Foundation Centre for Early Childhood to understand how we can incorporate their Shaping Us Framework in our work with families across Mull and Lorn. The framework was created by the Princess and the team and has been designed to highlight the importance of social and emotional skills and how organisations, like ours, can raise awareness to support this development in the early years. We are really excited to nurture this relationship further and work with the team in the future.

It was wonderful to be able to speak with the Princess all about the Framework and also our work on the island. Home-Start has been on the island of Mull since 2012 and has gone from strength to strength, especially in the last 4 years. We have seen an increase in families using our service, doubled our staffing team and opened our first office on the island. Our group work has increased hugely over the last few years with the introduction of antenatal classes, baby massage and a variety of baby and toddler groups. We have nurtured a wonderful relationship with our families but also have strong connections with other local organisations in the community as highlighted with our invitation to join the Aros Halls celebration.



Further News...



We made the most of the May sunshine and took our groups outdoors where possible- We had **Easter hunts, bug hunts, bouncy castle** fun and lots of **songs and stories** in the sunshine! We have recently begun having visitors to our Wednesday groups to provide parents/carers with the opportunity to meet other health teams and agencies on the island. First up was **Leanne and Charlie the crocodile** from **Childsmile** who attended our Bumps,



Babies and Toddler group in Salen. Leanne read all the children a story in the sunshine and provided lots of information and advice on all things oral hygiene and sugar intake.

Over the coming months we will be having Annabel, our community nursery nurse attending group to talk all things baby, sleep and weaning PLUS John from Mull and Iona First Aid to provide vital first aid advice and knowledge to our parents and carers.



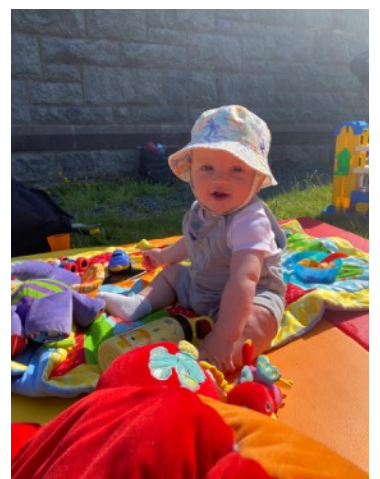
We would like to thank the MESS Island Charity Shop Grant and the Q Charitable Trust for grants we have received from them over the past couple of months. We were lucky to receive £250 from the **MESS Island Charity Shop Grant** which will go towards



buying a hot water urn and reusable cups to allow us to provide tea and coffee to parents and carers when we are out and about. Any remaining money will go towards some summer activities and updating group supplies. We have also received

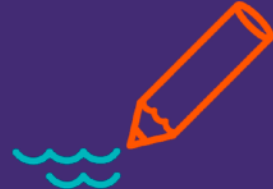


around £2500 from the **Q Charitable**, in partnership with the Royal Foundation, to trial **yoga classes** for parents and children on the island. This partnership is still in the early stages, and we are looking forward to working out the details and letting our families know about this lovely opportunity.



Find out more about MESS island charity shops:
<https://messmull.co.uk/island-castaways/>

Other news...



Volunteer update



Celebrating Volunteers Week

From June 2nd to 8th, we marked Volunteers Week, providing us with the opportunity to express our gratitude and celebrate our amazing volunteers. Currently, we have 29 registered volunteers who dedicate their time to our organisation and families, offering support and friendship to those in need.

The work we accomplish would not be possible without our volunteers, and we are incredibly grateful for their contributions. On average, our volunteers commit approximately 2 to 3 hours each week, engaging in a variety of activities such as:

- **Providing one-on-one support in family homes**
- **Fundraising within the community**
- **Helping families get out of the house**
- **Assisting at our Home-Start groups and Monday family centre pop-ins**

Our volunteers are incredibly talented, compassionate, and generous individuals who have the power to change lives within our community. We are always in need of more volunteers, so if you would like to support a family in need, make new friends, and feel more connected to your community, please get in touch with us today!

If you'd like to know more about the various volunteering roles with Home-Start Lorn please contact saskia@homestartlorn.org.uk or find out more on our website by going to the following link (or QR code above):

<https://homestartlorn.org.uk/volunteering>

New instagram

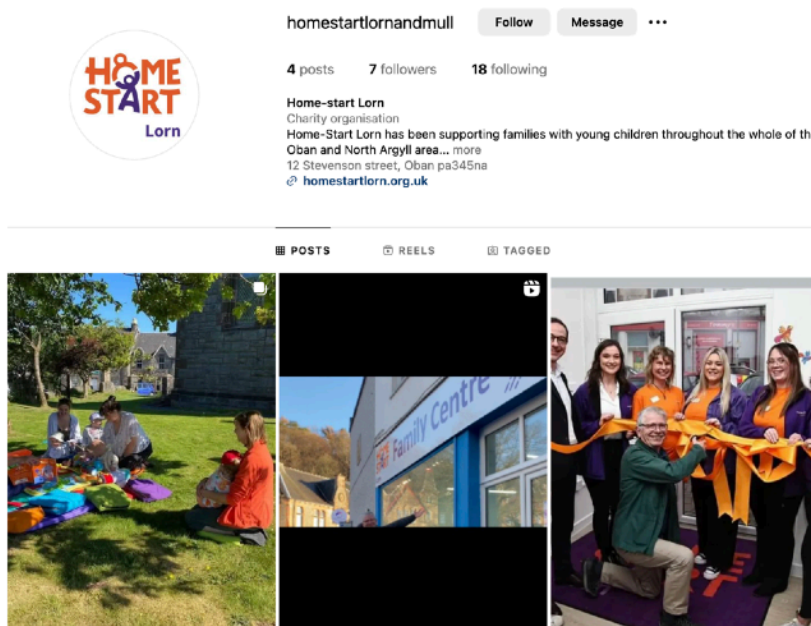
We understand that lots of people have their own preferable form of social media, so recently launched a new Instagram page that combines the work we do on the mainland and on Mull and the islands.

Updates might include events we've been at or are going to be at, new announcements, changes in staff and support for other services we interact with - amongst many other things.

If you'd like to follow us on Instagram we can be found at:

<https://www.instagram.com/homestartlornandmull/>

If you'd like to follow, our instagram handle is @homestartlornandmull.



The life of a Trustee (and volunteer!)...

June 2025

Home-Start Lorn has made the most amazing difference to my life. I had always worked in the NHS and really enjoyed the feeling that I was, hopefully, making a little positive difference to some people's lives. After I retired, and with no grandchildren to be involved with, I lost that feeling of being useful.

I joined Home-Start Lorn in 2021 and have supported a number of families over the last 4 years. The 'needs' of the families and what I have done with or for them has varied very significantly but in all cases, I have been able to enjoy myself hugely with my surrogate grandchildren, while being able to feel that I am, in small ways, making a positive difference to their lives. Getting back that feeling that my life has some purpose has been invaluable.

More recently, I have become a Trustee of Home-Start Lorn, which means I am now more involved in the running of the organisation, and that has also boosted my sense of being useful. The entire Home-Start team, staff volunteers and trustees, are so passionate about the organisation and about making a difference to local families with children that I feel it an honour to be part of such an inspiring organisation. I hope to continue to be a part of Home-Start Lorn for many years to come.

Seonaid Hamilton



**If you'd like to find out more about volunteering as a trustee contact us today on admin@homestartlorn.org.uk or visit our website to find out more via the link or QR code:
<https://homestartlorn.org.uk/>**



Home-Start East Highlands visit

On the 27th of May we had the pleasure of hosting our friends from **Home-Start East Highland** for a day dedicated to shared learning and peer support. It was not only a chance to strengthen our partnership but also an opportunity to delve into meaningful discussions about our work.

The day began with engaging conversations about our support services. Both teams shared insights into the support we offer, highlighting areas where we excel and identifying opportunities for growth. In our discussions, we also acknowledged the challenges we face in our local areas. Openly discussing these obstacles, we were able to brainstorm potential solutions and share advice on overcoming similar hurdles.

It was great to have the opportunity to receive feedback from the team at East Highland which has given us the opportunity to reflect on our hard work and achievements. It was a day of celebrating successes, acknowledging the dedication and passion that each team member brings to each others services, sharing our lessons learned and offering guidance to others. It was a fulfilling experience, reinforcing our commitment to continuous improvement and support for one another.

Find out more about Home-Start East Highland:

<https://home-starteasthighland.org.uk/>



The Great Funding Masterclass

Our manager, Hannah, recently attended The Great Fundraising Masterclass, organised by **Revolutionise International Ltd.** She described it as a “*great learning experience, filled with insightful discussions, innovative ideas, and invaluable lessons on what makes effective fundraising.*”

The sessions covered fresh perspective on fundraising, helping transforming what often feels like a daunting task into a series of actionable steps. Fundraising, especially in the third sector, can be intimidating. However, this course has helped Hannah to feel confident in her understanding of not only the significance of individual giving but also in how to strategically approach it for maximum impact and success.

The masterclass emphasised several key strategies that she found particularly enlightening:

- * Understanding Donor Motivation: Recognising what drives individuals to give and tailoring our approach to align with their values.
- * Building Relationships: Fostering long-term relationships with donors rather than focusing solely on one-time transactions.



MISS Information Session

A heartfelt thank you to **Laura**, a dedicated volunteer from **MISS (Miscarriage Support)**, for leading an insightful session for our team in Oban and online for our colleagues in Mull. She provided valuable information about the services and support available at MISS for those who have experienced miscarriage, as well as how our organisations can effectively collaborate to assist our local community.

Key Highlights:

- MISS offers a confidential space for individuals in Scotland to receive support, information, and advice, ensuring they know they are not alone after experiencing a miscarriage.
- We were particularly impressed by their provision of Support Packs and Memory Boxes for families, which is a resource we will ensure families are aware of.

Memory Boxes- These are funded, made and delivered by the MISS team to maternity hospitals across Scotland. Items included are candles, flower seeds, teddy bears, scanned card and several other items. These boxes are examples of how you can create memories as well as provide support for you.

Funding News



Funding Update

DONATE NOW SCAN QR>>>



We are thrilled to announce that we have successfully secured funding from several sources recently:

Core Costs

- **William Grant Foundation**- Who kindly gave a contribution towards core costs with a focus on three fund priorities 1- Families with children under 5 and those in the perinatal stages in the Oban, Lorn and Mull areas, the fund will be used to increase opportunities for support from Home-Start Lorn. 2- Establish and develop the new family centre in supporting the local community. 3- Support our Early Intervention Coordinators in their respective roles.
- **The Garfield Weston Foundation**- A contribution towards our core costs, including costs for staff, groups, volunteers and the overall running of the service. This will allow us to continue offering a lifeline to vulnerable young families in Oban and surrounding villages, and on the island of Mull.
- **The Argyll and Bute Early Years Fund**- Kindly gave to assist with core costs, specifically that have a direct impact on children aged 0 – 3 years.

Project funds

- **MESS Island Charity Shop**- Kindly gave funds for purchasing a hot water urn and reusable cups to allow us to provide tea and coffee to parents and carers when we are out and about.
- **Q Charitable Trust**- To trial yoga classes for parents and children on the island, including increasing staff working hours to facilitate those changes.
- **Happy Healthy Homes**, along with John Lewis vouchers- We managed to secure John Lewis Vouchers to purchase equipment that encourages play, healthy eating, and sleep. Both Lorn and Mull will have £400 each to spend on equipment across the key themes of the course- Healthy eating, sleep and play. Things may be bought for individual families also if this would be more beneficial at times than group/service equipment.

We are **incredibly grateful** to all funders for their support and belief in our mission. They are investing in our community through our organisation to **ensure children get the best start in life and also in parents/carers to ensure they are given the support, capacity, skills, and resilience to make this happen.**



And Finally....



Sunflower planting on Mother's Day!

We had a lovely, relaxing Mother's day group, where families and their children learned about planting sunflowers, making memorable gifts and all whilst enjoying afternoon tea and refreshments.

Fabulous volunteer Irene came along to offer Sunflower potting advice for the families who found out how to properly prepare the planting pots, seed the sunflowers adequately as well as how to care for their sunflowers in the coming essential months. Families got their own seeded pots to take away and enjoy at home.

The group also created lovely poems for mum, that involved flower-hand-prints and garden paintings as a super memory from the day.

