

HOME START

Lorn

Home-Start Lorn Newsletter

July 2026

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



Since April 2026, we have supported....

31

Families
supported via
1-2-1 support

44

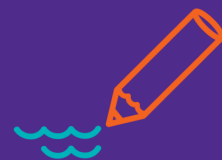
Children
supported via
1-2-1 support

98

Parents
supported via
group activities



Summer News 2026...



Hello and welcome to our summer newsletter of 2026!

Thankfully, we've enjoyed some much-needed sunshine over the past few weeks, and our groups have been making the most of it with a variety of fun summer activities on both sides of the water.

We were delighted to host our annual Family Picnic in Oban once again. A huge thank you goes to Adam at Stramash for generously allowing us to use the space for another fantastic year. It was wonderful to see so many families despite the lack of sunshine!

We were also thrilled to see the return of Charity Day this year. We'd like to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who bought or sold raffle tickets, and to the many generous local businesses who donated prizes and supported our fundraising efforts. Your kindness and community spirit make a real difference to the families we support.

As always, our one-to-one home visiting service remains at the heart of everything we do. This invaluable support is only possible because of our incredible team of volunteers, who give their time, compassion and commitment to local families.

We are currently recruiting new Home-Visiting Volunteers in both Oban and Mull. If you've ever thought about volunteering and would like to make a lasting difference to the lives of local children and families, we'd love to hear from you.

Thank you for your continued support, and we hope you enjoy reading about everything that's been happening across Home-Start Lorn this summer.

Saskia Ross

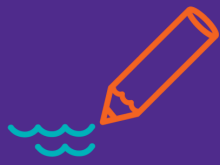
Home-Start Lorn Senior Co-ordinator



The Team and the Board of Trustees at our most recent joint meeting



Ante/postnatal support...



Growing Together: Ante & Postnatal Support at Home-Start Lorn

Whether you're expecting a baby or adjusting to life with a new little one, Home-Start Lorn is here to walk alongside you. We know those early weeks and months can be joyful, overwhelming, and everything in between — often all in the same day. Here's a round-up of how we can help.

Bumps and Babies – Weekly Peer Support

Our Bumps and Babies group runs weekly and is open to expectant parents and those with new babies. It's a relaxed, friendly space to connect with others going through the same stage of life — whether you want a cuppa and a chat, practical tips, or simply the reassurance that you're not alone. A local midwife has been attending most weeks, so it's also a chance to ask questions in an informal setting.

One-to-One Support When You Need It Most

At the heart of what Home-Start does is our core home-visiting service — trained volunteers and staff offering one-to-one support tailored to your family. The arrival of a new baby is one of the most intense transitions any parent faces, and we can be there with a listening ear, a helping hand, or simply someone who gets it. If you or someone you know could benefit, please get in touch.

Our Family Centre – Open and Welcoming

Our Family Centre is available for families to drop in and use — for feeding, changing, or just a quiet moment — whenever staff are in the office next door to unlock it, even outside organised activity times. Just pop in and ask.

We're also pleased to share that the Family Centre is now listed on both NHS Highland's Breastfeeding Friendly scheme interactive map and the Breastfeeding Network's Friendly Locations map. Wherever you are in your feeding journey, you're welcome here.

Looking Ahead: The Early Beginnings Project

We're thrilled to announce that we have recently secured funding from the Scottish Government funding through the Argyll and the Islands Community Led Local Development Fund (CLLD) for our new Early Beginnings project, which will allow us to develop a structured programme of ante and postnatal support.

Right now we're in our capacity-building phase — staff members are undertaking specialist training in areas including:

- Baby massage
- Yoga
- Feeding support
- Peep training for antenatal classes

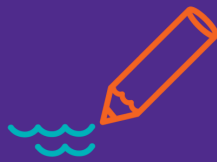
Once training is complete, we'll be expanding our offer significantly. Watch this space!

Working in Partnership

None of this happens in isolation. We're fortunate to have a strong and supportive relationship with local statutory services — in particular our midwifery team and nursery nurses — who have championed our work from the start. As well as the midwife's regular presence at Bumps and Babies, both services provided letters of support for our funding applications. It's a partnership that means families in Lorn benefit from joined-up, complementary care.

For more information about any of our services, or to make a referral, get in touch with the Home-Start Lorn team.

Community events



Home-Start Lorn at the Health & Wellbeing Network Day

On 24th June, Home-Start Lorn joined colleagues from across the local third sector at the Health and Wellbeing Network Meeting and Public Event, held at the Rockfield Centre.

The morning kicked off with a network meeting bringing together 31 representatives from local charities and organisations — a great opportunity to share updates, strengthen connections, and explore how we can work together to support our community.

In the afternoon, the doors opened to the public with 21 information stalls showcasing the range of support available locally. It was wonderful to see so many people come along to find out what's on their doorstep.

We were delighted to share our table with Laura Livingston from the charity Miss, which offers support to anyone navigating pregnancy loss, subsequent pregnancies, or trying to conceive again. Laura is a friendly, knowledgeable presence and she already attends our Monday pop-in sessions on a monthly basis — so if you'd like to connect with her, that's an easy way to do so in a relaxed and supportive setting. There is also the following support email which can be used to self refer or for 1-1 or virtual support groups: advice@miss-support.org.uk



High School Careers Fair

On Tuesday 23rd June, Nikki and Jo attended Oban High School's Business Breakfast and Careers Fair. The day was an excellent opportunity to network with other local organisations and to chat to Oban's wonderful young people about a career in the third sector. The students had some fantastic questions for us and a lot of them were very interested in what we do and how they could be involved in the future. A lot of them expressed a desire to work with children, but had never considered that there were other ways to do this that didn't necessarily involve teaching or nursery work and they were grateful for an opportunity to discuss what our jobs entail. We had a fabulous time and are already looking forward to our invite next year!





Mulling over Mull!

Our summer sunshine is finally here with lots of fun in the sun for Home-start Mull.

During May, June and July we have been busy bees, from fairies to crocodiles, rain to sunshine, toddle walks to yoga stretches, it's been Home-Start go go go.

We had a special visit from Child Smiles, where Charlie the crocodile had his teeth brushed and the children enjoyed a story. Leanne, our lovely Dental Nurse, brought lots of useful info for our parents to devour, keeping us all on track for happy, healthy smiles.

Bookbug was a big hit in the South island, bringing families from Iona and Ardtun together for songs and stories, followed by toys, games and laughter.

We painted shells and pebbles with bright colours and sparkles and gave them to the Fairies. A beautiful day, wondering through the Fairy Glen, decorating the woodland with our painted treasures, bubbles blowing to guide our Oban visitors to the entrance and onto the hall for snacks in the shade with toys and activities for the children to play and cuppas to refuel our Mums on the first hot day.

A toddle walk around Aros Park, kept us all on our toes with toddlers in every direction and pace! We found leaves and bugs and swung in the trees. Climbed up and down banks, in and out of bushes, all around the loch, finishing with everyone ready for an afternoon nap.

As the rain kept on coming, we took to Tobermory soft play for indoor fun. Filled the scout hall with toys and activities for little ones to let off some steam and parents to enjoy some good company.





More news from Mull

Our Mini Movers Yoga with baby was very popular! Our lovely Victoria created a calm yet energising ambiance, combining gentle postpartum exercises for parents, rebuilding core strength, with sensory movement for babies. These lovely sessions used breathing, stretching and sound to promote baby bonding, ease digestion and support baby's physical and neurological development.

Our first Weaning Workshop went really well. We listened to our parents concerns and gave reassurance, knowledge and confidence where needed. Recipes were tried and tasted, sharing easy, safe and yummy meal ideas. We did an 'Is Your Baby Ready' quiz, a detailed - what to do when choking guide, a video about gagging for reassurance, with lots of one to one discussions.

Our Buggy Walk friends from Oban came over on the ferry for fun in the park and the sun came out to play. A great day out, with playpark fun in the sun! It was lovely to have a visit from our Oban Homestart families. Our lovely volunteer Annie, kept everyone topped up with refreshments and snacks, the gymnastic fantastic joined us for a picnic in the park and even my grandson came to say hello, loving the swings, as high as they'd go!

We enjoyed a Splash and Swim with floats and water toys in our island community swimming pool. Delighted to hear that they have teamed up with the government and will be offering free swims to our Island families throughout the summer!

Tomorrow is our Teddy Bears Picnic in the woodland park. We will bring our picnics and Teddy Bears, do a scavenger hunt, bug finding and parachute songs and games.

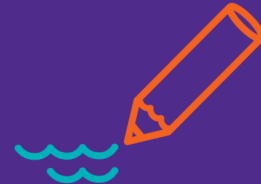
We have had a huge increase in babies on the Isle of Mull and are delighted to be supporting so many families. Our one to one support given to families is greatly appreciated and hugely rewarding. We are reaching families far and wide, who really need our support and benefit greatly from our wonderful service.

We are excited to be looking for a new manager and will be keeping our fingers and toes crossed for a successful candidate.

In the near future, we are getting involved in an island well being day, where all helpful services available will gather together to bring awareness and support to those in need.

We are looking forward to the 5th August, where we are revisiting the Fairy Woodland and park on a grander scale, with our award winning Bookbug joining us from Fionnphort for a summer special day.





Father's Day

On Saturday 20th June, we ran a Father's Day 'Beach and Butties' celebration at Ganavan Beach. All the dads (and mums) were treated to a bacon sandwich and we lead a group of willing hikers on the trails heading from the beach. We feel very strongly about providing an inclusive experience for dads as well as mums and we wanted to take a moment to celebrate all of our amazing Home-Start dads. Going forward, we would love to be able to provide more opportunities for dads to be involved in our groups and are actively looking at how we can achieve this. Thank you dads for everything that you do.

Sensory Sessions

In June, our group coordinator Jo ran two outdoor sensory sessions: one to celebrate World Oceans Day and one to celebrate World Rainforest Day. Our Ocean Sensory session was hosted at Ganavan Beach and the children played with dyed rice, ocean animals, natural objects from the beach and blue slime. Dunbeg Primary School very kindly offered us their incredible woodland outdoor learning space for our Forest Sensory session. The children had a great time playing with home-made play dough, taste-safe "mud", green spaghetti and edible flowers, as well as natural objects from the forest around them. We also want to give a huge shout out to Oban Toy Library for lending us toys for both sessions so that our children were able to play with something new. We hope to be able to run more sensory sessions in the future as they are always well attended and highly valued by our families.

Peep training

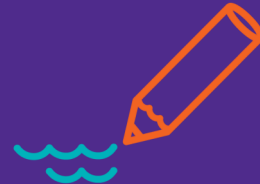
In June, Rebecca, Saskia, Jo and Nikki completed the Peep Learn Together programme. This is a parental learning course covering five main learning strands, Communication and Language, PSA, Early Literacy, Early Maths, Health and Physical Development. This course can be delivered in groups or one-to-one with families, and we're really looking forward to providing these learning opportunities in the near future. This training was made possible thanks to funding received through the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund, administered locally by the by Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface.

Atlantis Sports Play

On Monday 29th June, to celebrate our summer of sport, Nikki and Jo ran a 'Sports Play' session at Atlantis. The brilliant coaches there set up some fantastic activities for the children to burn off lots of summer steam including an air track, balance beam, giant ball pit, tunnels and lots and lots of balls! We all had a great time and the event brought in over 30 children! Many parents commented that they would love to see us run something similar again in the future and this is something that we would love to do if funds allow.



Oban news...



Summer Picnic

In the magical outdoor setting of Stramash nursery, Home-Start Lorn held our annual Summer Family Picnic — and it was a joy, even under grey skies! Laughter, soggy wellies, and plenty of smiles kept spirits high as families gathered to play, connect, and celebrate the start of summer together.

We're deeply grateful to Adam and the team at Stramash for welcoming us into their beautiful space and supporting our wee celebration. Huge thanks as well to the crew from Oban Fire Station, who were a brilliant hit with curious little ones; to the wonderful, super-entertaining Rhubarb Cabaret for bringing joy and music to the drizzle; and to Bookbug for cosy songs and stories that warmed everyone up.

Most of all, thank you to every family who braved the rain on Saturday. Your enthusiasm turned a damp day into a memorable one. Here's to community, resilience, and many more puddle-splashing picnics to come!



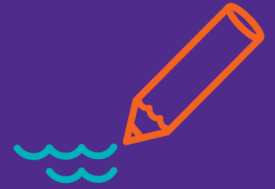
Inspiralba report QA1 26/27

Since April 2026 we have supported 14 clients on the inspiralba program. There are two main programs that we offer, the Spark Your Purpose program, which is generally open to people over 18 years old who are looking for support to find training/ education or get into a specific area of employment. The second program is the Parental Employability Support Fund which aims to support parents with young children either get back into work, improve their wellbeing or support them into further training.

More specifically in the past quarter we have on the Spark your purpose program... Supported 2 clients with driving lessons. Supported 2 clients in their hope of starting a business (Bicycle tours & up cycled spice and storage racks made from vintage wine boxes) Supported one client with their wellbeing (gym membership) Supported 2 clients in specific training (fishery industry tickets & mobile and tablet engineer course).

On the Parental Employability Support Program we have... Supported 1 client with further education (onto a path into a renewable energy role) Supported 3 clients with Driving Lessons in order to improve their chances of employability and reduce their isolation. Supported one client with business equipment purchases to increase their hours and client base in their current role. Supported one client into further training (setting up as a childminder) Supported one client into starting a business (setting up a website and selling artwork).

Upcoming events...



New Buggy Club Partnership Gets Families Out and About

We are delighted to introduce our new weekly Buggy Club, in partnership with the Community Nursery Nurses. The group has been created to give families with young children the opportunity to get outdoors, enjoy fresh air, and connect with other parents and carers in a welcoming and supportive environment. It allows joint working between Home Start Lorn and the Community Nursery Nurses which allows for quicker referrals between both organisations.

We are excited to see Buggy Club continue to grow and look forward to welcoming even more families on future walks and outings. Thank you to everyone who has helped make this partnership such a positive start, and we can't wait for the adventures still to come.

One of the highlights so far has been our recent trip to Mull. The sunshine came out and the weather was perfect! Families embraced the adventure, enjoyed spending quality time together, and made wonderful memories. The day was filled with laughter, exploration, and plenty of smiles. We will return to Mull for the Fairy Woodland walk as advertised below! See you there!



TRANSPORT



9:55
to Mull



15:40
back to Oban

**HOME
START**
Lorn

Wednesday 5th August

Craignure 10.45am - 2.45pm

FAIRY WOODLAND WALK

PLAYPARK & PICNIC

BOOKBUG SUMMER SPECIAL

MEET AT THE ISLE OF MULL HOTEL CAR PARK

TIP TOE THROUGH THE FAIRY GLEN

SPRINKLE IT WITH FAIRY TREASURES

CAN YOU SEE AN EAGLE, OTTER....

OR A FAIRY CASTLE?

ZOOM ALONG FOR A PLAY IN THE PARK

BRING YOUR FAVOURITE PICNIC TREATS

INTO THE HALL FOR OUR FIONNNPHORT GUEST,

IT'S BOOKBUG HIP HIP HOORAY!

STORY, SONGS, RYMES AND GAMES

WHAT A FABULOUS SUMMERS DAY

HOME-START AND BOOKBUG

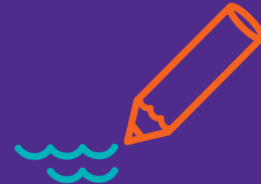
EVENTS ARE FREE



**JOIN US FOR
A MAGICAL DAY
OF ADVENTURE,
FUN & STORIES!**



Fundraising...



Charity run

Enormous thanks to local dad, Tommy Jordan, who raised a fabulous £200 for Home-Start Lorn through running the Mull of Kintyre 10km! Many thanks to Tommy for choosing to support us, and well done for the run!



Home-Start Lorn at Charities Day — shipshape and shining

Batten down the hatches — Charities Day was a cracker, and Home-Start Lorn was proud to be part of the crew celebrating the brilliant work that keeps Oban cheerful, connected, and thriving.

The Rockfield Centre was alive with activity as more than 20 local charities set out their stalls. Laughter rang out from festivities galore — raffles, bottle stalls, hook the duck, treasure hunts, quizzes, and a trusty teddy table — while friendly faces stopped by for a blether and a bit of fun.

At our own berth, the charity raffle and toy tombola drew a steady stream of eager shipmates, helping us raise a mighty £794.40 for local families. To everyone who donated a prize, took a ticket, tried their luck, or spread the word — your kindness fills our sails.

Hearty thanks to the volunteers and supporters who kept things shipshape all day.

From first bell to last, Charities Day was a reminder of what makes this community special: generosity, good humour, and neighbours looking out for one another. Until the next voyage, take care me hearties from all of us at Home-Start Lorn.



Generous Donation from Kings of the Jungle MMC

We were enormously grateful to be the chosen charity to receive a generous donation from the Kings of the Jungle MMC at the unveiling of a new memorial bench at McCaigs Tower in Oban on Saturday 18th July. The new bench is called the Rider's Rest and was commissioned first and foremost in memory of two club members - Brian and Alan – but it is intended to be a lasting legacy; somewhere for all to pause, reflect, take in the beauty of the view, and especially remember anyone lost on two wheels. The bench has a QR code which directs to an online tribute book for fallen riders. There is also a link to enable further donations to be made to Home-Start Lorn. In a moving ceremony and beautiful sunshine, the bench was unveiled and a cheque for £500 presented to Rachel Hathaway from Home-Start Lorn. Additional donations have since been added up to a total of £700

Afterwards families were welcome to admire, and sit on, the motorbikes present at the occasion. Many thanks to David McWilliams and Kings of the Jungle MMC for choosing to raise funds for Home-Start Lorn.

Scan the code and leave a picture and a message for a loved one.



Gone But Never Forget



Funding News



Funding update

We are absolutely delighted to have been granted Scottish Government funding through the Argyll and the Islands Community Led Local Development Fund (CLLD) for our **Early Beginnings** project which will allow us to create an ante and postnatal programme of support. CLLD funding will cover our capacity building phase, during which staff members are undergoing the training required to specialise in areas including baby massage, yoga and feeding support. Page three of this newsletter has information about what is currently offered, and we are so excited to expand our ante/postnatal support provision in order to offer enhanced assistance to parents with young babies. Huge thanks to the Argyll and the Islands Local Action Group (LAG) for backing our project, and to the CLLD team for all of their help and support.

It is thanks to our funders and the generosity of our community that we are able to continue running our organisation and supporting local families.

If you would like to donate and help us continue this work, you can do so through our People's Fundraising link- <https://www.peoplesfundraising.com/donation/home-start-lorn>

An enormous thank you to all of our funders! Without their support, belief in the service, and financial backing, we would not be able to operate.



Scottish
Government
Riaghaltas
na h-Alba

Q CHARITABLE
TRUST



WILLIAM GRANT
FOUNDATION

SUPPORTED BY

B B C
CHILDREN
IN NEED



As a charity, our continued service provision is always reliant on securing ongoing funding.

If you are reading this newsletter and are in a position to make a monetary contribution, please see our website for full information about different ways to donate:

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

