



Newsletter

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**H&ME
START**
Cotswolds

It's hard to believe that it's nearly Christmas! We were getting into the festive spirit on Saturday 16th November, when Hatherop Castle school held their annual Christmas fair. Thanks to the involvement of one of our volunteers, the school generously donated half of their ticket sales to us which, at the time of writing, will be at least £750! So thank you to everyone at Hatherop Castle and all those who attended.



Two of our trustees, Tony and Chris, also went along to the school's Chapel Service the following week, to talk to the children and teachers. They used the story of The Good Samaritan to illustrate their theme of how we can help each other. Having asked the children to think about how much better they feel when they can talk to a friend if they have a worry, they explained that adults feel the same, which is where Home-Start come in—helping children by helping their families. It isn't easy to tell children about what we do in a way that is age-appropriate, so well done Tony and Chris.

Our Trusty Trustees!

Trustees Week 2019 took place earlier this month and we want to thank our team of amazing voluntary trustees and advisors, who give their valuable time and expertise to us so generously. Pictured below are all bar three. From left to right, they are (back row): Mike Hellens, Carla Partridge, Sarah Smithson, Steve Kaufmann (Chair), Fiona Blacker and Tony Jones. Front row: Carolyn Ford, Clare Baker, Richard Waller and Chris Hall. We really appreciate everything you do and, as we keep saying, we couldn't do what we do without you!



Bags of Help



From 1 January 2020, Tesco in Tetbury will have Home-Start Cotswolds as one of the three charities that customers can

vote for using blue tokens given out at the tills. The money we receive will be used to support families in the Tetbury area, so please tell anyone you know who might visit that store—and encourage them to ask for a token if they are not given one automatically. As Tesco themselves once said: every little bit helps!

Our Friends in the North?

We are on an urgent hunt for volunteers who live in the North Cotswolds (eg. Northleach and



above), to start our Preparation Course on 22nd January. If you know anyone who lives in that area (eg. Bourton-on-the-Water, Stow-on-the-Wold, Chipping Campden, Moreton-in-Marsh, etc.), please ask them to look at our website (see over) for more information.

Family Feedback

‘Having a volunteer visit me has helped me feel less alone. I have family and a husband so I’m not physically alone, but in motherhood I feel very trapped and alone and my volunteer has helped me feel less so.’

‘My volunteer has been a wonderful help, giving my daughter attention and encouraging me to sit down and play with her. I feel a better bond starting to form between me and my daughter and I’m realising the importance of taking time out for her.’

‘Having a volunteer has done me the world of good. I gained a lot from being supported emotionally. When I was told about Home-Start, I could not imagine having someone in my home or letting them take my children out, but I see it all differently now.’

‘My volunteer has given me confidence and been so understanding about my situation. A friendly face to talk to openly.’

Free online shopping donations



You could raise an extra gift for us for FREE! Click [@GiveasyouLive](#) before you shop, and the retailer will pay us a percentage of your purchase as a donation, at no cost to you. Merry Christmas!



Reconnect



Bourton-on-the-Water Parish council have once again kindly donated towards the cost of running our Reconnect Group. Each week at the group, mums with mental health needs come together to do craft activities, such as making ‘Jars of



Positivity’ (above) or jewellery (right), while their children are looked after in a free creche. The mums have formed their own ‘peer support’ group, so they can message each other at other times, such as when they are doing an exhausting night feed!

‘Eventful’ donations!

We are very grateful to the organisers of a number of community events for their kind donations. In addition to Hatherop Castle overleaf, we have received money from The Three Village Produce Show, Little Faringdon Bonfire Party and Coln St Aldwyns Children’s Fun Day. If you are organising a community event over Christmas—or know someone who is—perhaps they would consider supporting us in some way? As well as the funds themselves, any additional publicity for Home-Start Cotswolds is really valuable. Thank you!