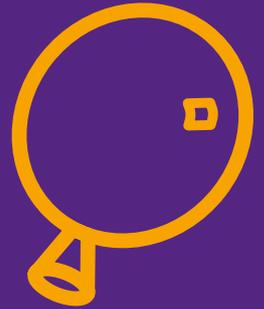


HOME START

South
Warwickshire



Annual Report 2022/2023

Because childhood can't wait

About Us

Established in 2019, Home-Start South Warwickshire (HSSW) is a local community network of trained volunteers who support vulnerable families with a child under 5, through challenging times. South Warwickshire is a rural county covering nearly 500 square miles and many of our families are isolated, facing limited access to essential services such as healthcare and public transport.

The families we work with face a variety of challenges, including financial hardship, multiple births, mental ill health, physical health problems and isolation. Many of our families are single mums and over half of the mums suffer from mental health issues, including postnatal anxiety and depression. 45% have suffered from domestic abuse.

We offer a unique service supporting families for between 6-9 months, plugging the gap that over-subscribed statutory services cannot offer. We receive self-referrals as well as referrals from midwives, health visitors, social prescribers, and family support workers.

We support parents to give their children the best start in life because research tells us that the first years of life are when children develop attachments and emotional regulation, learn about relationships and social interaction.



of UK parents have suffered from loneliness*
The Centre for Early Childhood (2021)



of the parents we support report feeling lonely and isolated



of the mums and dads we support say they suffer with poor mental health

Our mission is to offer parents who are struggling the support they need to feel emotionally well and confident in parenting.

Message from our Chair of Trustees, Selina Kermode:

Home-Start South Warwickshire continues to grow from strength to strength. Now with 11 employed staff and an income of nearly £250k, the rise in 4 years of running has been absolutely stellar. Helping families is the core and focus of everything we do and I'm so proud to be able to say we supported nearly 700 beneficiaries this year across one-to-one support and groups. The people are what makes HSSW special – huge thanks go to our dedicated volunteers and staff who go above and beyond, as well as our funders and all those who attended the magical Sparkle Ball.



Message from our Head of Operations, Marie Ashford:

As Head of Operations I am always inspired by the amazing dedication of our volunteers, staff and trustees, and this year is no different. This year we have navigated challenges and changes in order to keep providing a brighter, more inclusive future for the families we help. And the past year has also been about putting in place the necessary structures to ensure our resilience and sustainability; implementing robust financial processes, increasing fundraising streams and monitoring our effectiveness through impact evaluation. It is true to say that as each year passes our commitment to making a positive difference grows stronger.



Message from our Finance and Income Generation Manager - Caroline Pepperell:

It has been a busy year as we navigate the changes in financial reporting and the challenges of an increasingly competitive fundraising landscape. We are fortunate to have a number of local trusts and foundations that have supported us from the start, as well as businesses who regularly donate gifts for our families and hold employee fundraising events for our benefit. I am always amazed by the generosity of staff, volunteers, trustees and supporters who freely give their time to raise money for us. From a sponsored bike ride to running the London Marathon, each pound raised makes a huge difference to local families.

Our Year in Numbers

In 2022/23 we supported...



234
families



698
beneficiaries



24 families
attended our
PEEP sessions



42 families
supported with
counselling

	Families	Beneficiaries
1:1 Volunteer Home-visiting	75	272
Perinatal groups	54	156
PEEP groups	24	59
Freedom Programme	14	31
1:1 Counselling	42	107
Mum2Mum groups	25	73
Totals	234	698

104
referrals
received



79
going onto
support



"I am honestly so grateful to you guys. It's such a relief to know you're there and that I can refer a family to you and know you will help them"

**Jo, Warwickshire
Health Visitor**

One to One Home-Visiting

Our Home-Visiting family support service focuses on offering friendly, non-judgemental support to parents with young children. Peer volunteers visit families in their own home to offer tailored support - every family is different, so we listen to families to offer support that works for them.

We supported 75 families with regular home-visits from trained staff or volunteers throughout South Warwickshire.

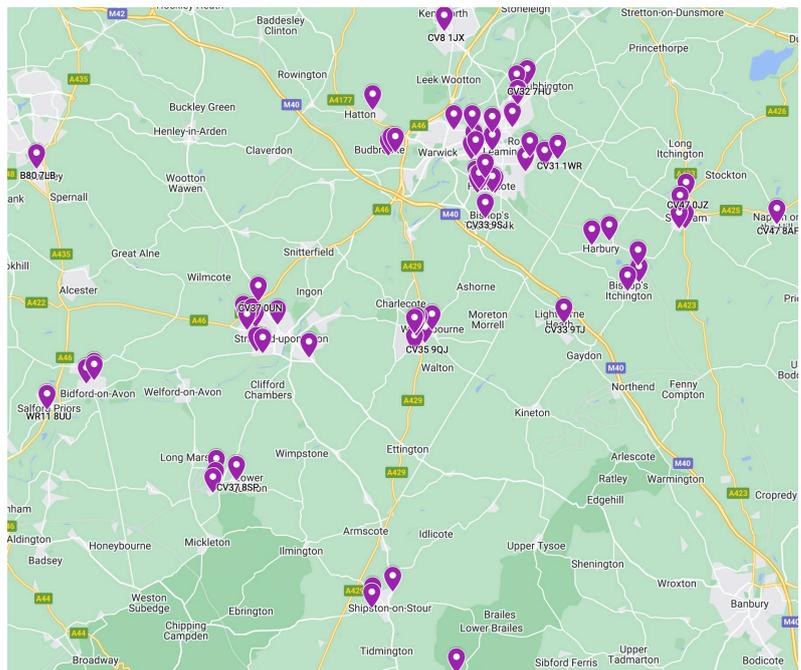
Our volunteers made 731 home visits giving nearly 2800 hours of 1:1 support.

As a result of our 1:1 Volunteer Home-Visiting support:

79% felt less isolated or saw an improvement in social networks.

89% felt their mental health had improved.

78% saw an improvement in their child's behaviour, boundaries, and routines.



.....

“My volunteer is the nicest, kindest, most caring and loving person that I have ever met. She has been an ear to listen, a shoulder to cry on, allowing me to rest, when need be, somebody I can go to for advice and the greatest asset to my family. She’s made me remember that I’m a person and I feel important and confident again.”

Family supported by Home-Start South Warwickshire

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Case Study: Ellie's story



My life before Home-Start was hectic. I am a single mum with four children who were all under the age of three when I was first in touch with Home-Start. I had new-born twins who were born at 34 weeks, and I was trying to find my feet adjusting to a new routine with two extra children while trying not to disrupt my old routine too much. I felt very stressed, anxious and isolated as not many people understood what I was going through and I was also very overwhelmed with my new life and the amount of pressure I put on myself to make sure my house was spotless and that I was never behind on my washing etc I was in over drive and very sleep deprived, Home-Start came at a time where I thought I didn't need help, but looking back now I definitely did. I'd have burnt myself out, working double time to be able to get things done.

My volunteer is the nicest, kindest, most caring, and loving person that I have ever met. She has been an ear to listen, a shoulder to cry on, allowing me to rest, when need be, somebody I can go to for advice and the greatest asset to my family. She's made me remember that I'm a person and I feel important and confident again.

All four of my children absolutely adore her, especially my twins. When she walks in their little faces light up with joy and crawl straight to her. We go on outings to the park, go for a walk, she offers to say longer, if need be, helps me do jobs around the house and garden, offers to come with me to the girls' appointments, checks in throughout the week. All these little things all just add up and I cannot thank her enough!

We attended a baby group weekly which was one of the best things I've ever done, I've made some amazing friends and so have our children and I still see my volunteer weekly. It was so nice to be recognised as "Ellie" instead of just a mum. It's really given me a confidence boost. If I hadn't got some help from Home-Start South Warwickshire, I wouldn't have made some lifelong friends, and I would be a lot more isolated, lonely and exhausted.



"Home-Start South Warwickshire has changed my life. The amount of support and kindness I have received is unmatched especially as I thought I didn't need help; I really don't know where I'd be without them."



Our volunteers

Our volunteers are the key to Home-Start support. The wealth of experience and passion they bring to supporting families is what makes us what we are. Volunteering is also a fantastic way to gain experience, skills & confidence, and our volunteers tell us that seeing the difference they make to families is incredibly rewarding.

- **We have 61 volunteers who support our 1:1 home-visiting, Dad Matters and groups.**
- **We trained 33 new volunteers during the year**
- **In addition to visiting families in their own home our volunteers gave 1085 hours attending training, meetings or supporting groups.**

We also provided our volunteers with additional training in First Aid, annual safeguarding, Perinatal Infant Mental Health, Sleep Advice for babies and over 1's, Happy Healthy Eating.

Claire' story:

Claire's volunteering with Home-Start South Warwickshire began in 2020 and since then she has supported three families on a one-to-one basis. Her first family faced complex challenges involving the police and social services. Claire provided assistance with routines, encouraged quality time with the children, helped create a comfortable space for the youngest, and assisted with various household tasks. In subsequent roles, she learned to empower families, model play, and act as an advocate for their needs.

Reflecting on her experiences, "As I've supported each family, I know how much more beneficial it is for the families when you aren't doing things for them but working with them and empowering them."

For Claire, the most gratifying aspect of her volunteering journey lies in the expressions of gratitude from the families she assists. She recalls with warmth the words of one mother she supported, who expressed, "You are the best Mum I've ever had," a testament to the profound impact of Home-Start's support in their lives.



We would like to give a heartfelt THANK YOU to our fantastic team of volunteers.

They give up their time so generously to support our families either in their own home or through the many peer support groups we offer. Without their enthusiasm and dedication, we could not make such a difference to families who need it the most.

Our Groups

The importance of social support networks for new parents has been well-documented and can help to improve parents' self-esteem, confidence, stress levels and ability to access further support.

PEEP

PEEP is designed for parents/carers and their children aged between 1.5-2 years to lay the foundations for early years development, empower parents to nurture confident communicators and active learners.



"Thank you for running this group... It's nice to attend a group where you don't feel judged, everyone is experiencing different challenges with family life and this group helped me remember it's not just me that is struggling."

FREEDOM SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Our Freedom Programme courses are for women who have been affected by domestic abuse and provide a safe space to share stories, recognise traits of abusers and discuss life after abuse.



"Thank you yet again Home Start for all of your support and help. I didn't know how much I needed this course; it's been unbelievably invaluable, and I am so so grateful!"



ANTE AND POSTNATAL GROUPS

Our ante and postnatal groups offer time to focus on Mums; connecting with other new Mums, sharing stories and advice, supporting and nurturing each other and making friends. Time is spent focusing on Mums' healing and their personal experiences of the 'Fourth Trimester'.

82
groups

156
mums,
partners &
children

"Really supportive group has been so helpful in my first few months of motherhood! I always come away feeling more relaxed and confident. It's really nice having consistent facilitators who know me and my baby."

MUM2MUM AND STAY AND PLAY

Our Mum 2 Mum groups and Stay and Play groups are small, informal and held in easily accessible spaces to enable mums and other local mums to meet, make friends and for children to interact and play.

89
groups

73
mums &
children

"The team were very friendly and welcoming, thank you so much for making me and my son feel very welcome."

OUTCOMES ACROSS ALL OUR GROUPS:

	Reduction in Isolation	Improved Mental Health	Improved confidence in parenting ability
Freedom	89%	67%	100%
PEEP	74%	93%	93%
Mum2Mum/Stay and Play	75%	75%	64%
Ante and Postnatal	100%	79%	77%

Bump-Start

The Bump-Start pilot programme originated from a collaborative effort with Warwickshire Health Visiting Service, to address the needs of new families in response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Local evidence for the project's necessity came from feedback from health visitors in Leamington Spa. They highlighted the importance of support networks for new parents.

The project focused on health inclusion and aimed to provide practical, emotional and befriending support to parents during pregnancy and the first year after birth. Parents were offered 1-2-1 volunteer support in the home and/or group support where new mothers could relax and socialise. The mums who participated found that, because of this support, they experienced less anxiety, stress and depression, and felt more confident in their parenting abilities.



felt less isolated



felt their mental health had improved



felt more confident and had higher esteem

Dad Matters

Dad matters is a universal peer support service with male volunteers engaging with as many dads as possible in the antenatal and postnatal periods, to support dads with attachment, bonding and mental health. The 1001 critical days is a period of change for new parents, and a time when parents are open to learning and making connections.

Following on from a successful first year our project has continued to map local resources available to dads, to engage with health professionals working with parents during the 1001 critical days, to train Dad Champions and to provide outreach support at NHS antenatal classes in Warwick and Stratford-upon-Avon and at Warwick Hospital.

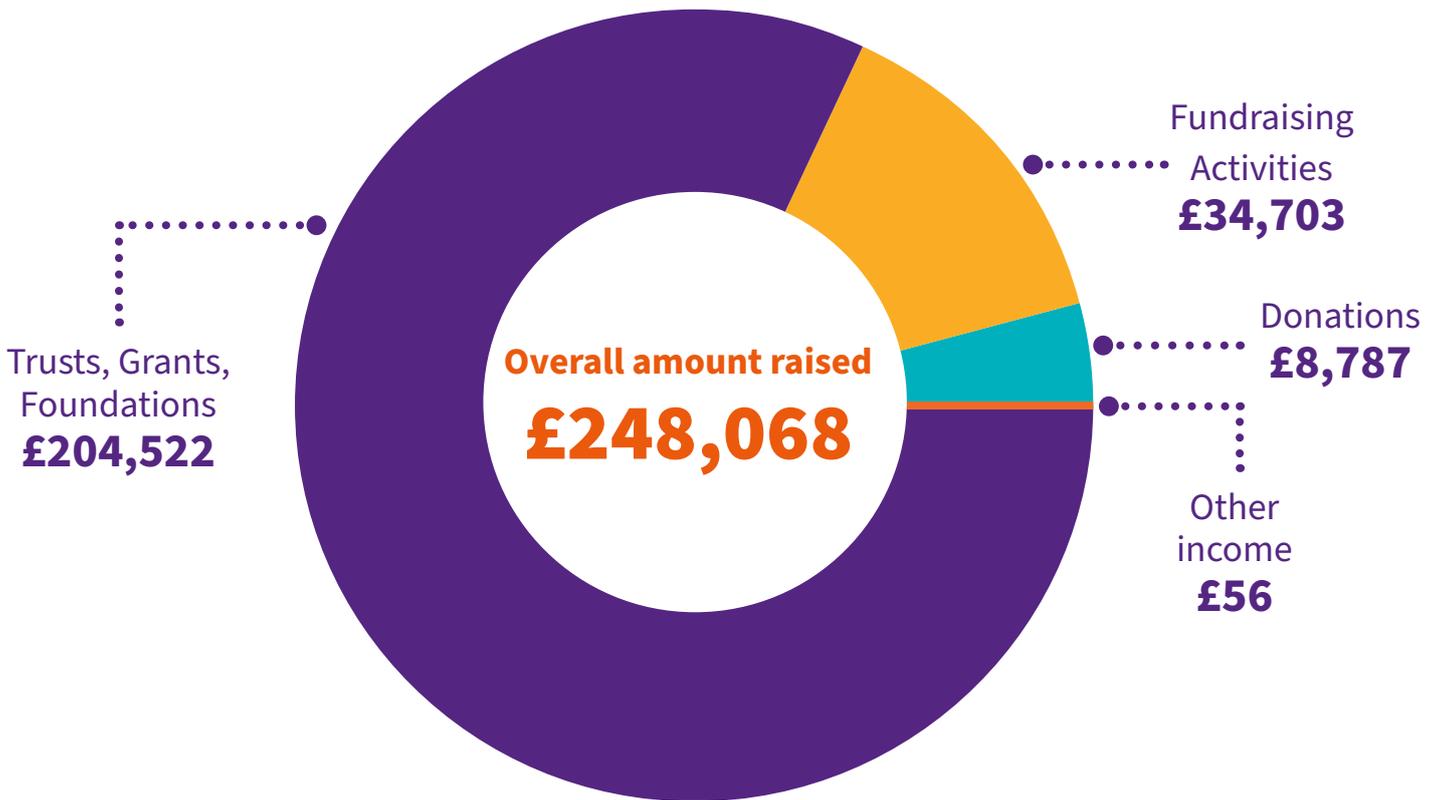


We are very grateful to Stratford Town Trust and The Thomas Oken and Nicholas Eyffler Charity who have kindly funded the continuation of these projects in Stratford and Warwick respectively.

Financial Snapshot

A successful year with income **up 39% on last year** was balanced against increasing expenditure as we gave our staff a well-deserved cost of living pay rise and conducted a pay review.

Competition for funding is at an all-time high against the backdrop of everyone feeling the squeeze financially, so maintaining close control of our costs will be key to ensuring our long-term sustainability.



Expenditure	
Raising funds	£1,276
Professional fees	£6,993
Rent and support costs	£7,726
Programme costs	£43,155
Salaries	£182,296
Total	£241,446



Most of our expenditure goes towards supporting our staff and volunteers, who are the backbone of the projects we carry out. Our services rely on the quality, knowledge and experience of our staff and volunteers to ensure they have the necessary skills and support to help our families in a meaningful way.

Memorable events...



Sparkle Ball March



Sparkle Ball March





Family Christmas Party



Yvette Harris Sponsored Bike Ride



Volunteer Christmas Party



Home-Start South Warwickshire Networking Event

Thank you

Thank you to our staff and volunteers for going above and beyond in their commitment to improve the lives of local families.

A special mention and **thank you** must go to the Sparkle Ball committee, led by Kate Melly and one of our trustees Alex Anderson, who put on a fabulous event that raised over £30,000. We are so grateful for your dedication to delivering such a fabulous event.

We are immensely grateful to our funders and supporters who enable us to continue our work through grants, fundraising activities and generous donations.

Our Funders and Supporters in 22/23

Alcester Minster Churches

Ally and Simon Purchon

Claverdon Fields Charitable Trust

Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust

George Cadbury Trust

Groundwork

Ilmington Show

L and D Seccombe Trust

Lions Christmas Christmas Collection

Magic Little Grants

Midcounties Co-op Fund

NFU Mutual

Robert and Felicity Waley-Cohen Charitable Trust

Sonya Quinn

Stella Symons Trust

Stratford Town Trust

Stratford upon-Avon Give and Take

The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust

The Charity of Thomas Oken and Nicholas Eyffler

The Dumbreck Charity

The Henry Smith Charity

The Masonic Charitable Trust

The National Lottery Community Fund

The Saintbury Trust

The Sparkle Ball Committee

VCSE Innovation Fund

Waitrose

WCC Councillors Funds - Leamington and Stratford

WCC Social Impact Fund

Western Power Distribution

Yvette Harris

We would also like to thank all the individuals and organisations who have either donated through fundraising events or our website, and to everyone who has supported our families with donations of items.

With special thanks to:

Deirdre Edwards, Chair of Trustees from August 2019 to August 2023

Lin Griffiths, Trustee from August 2019 to May 2023



We are sincerely grateful to Deirdre and Lin for their invaluable service as Chair of Trustees and Trustee over the past four years. Their dedication and strategic insights have greatly advanced our mission of supporting families in need and made a lasting impact on our organisation. We truly appreciate their exceptional leadership and contributions. Thank you, Deirdre and Lin, for your unwavering support and outstanding service.

Ted Tuthill, Charity Operations Manager from January 2022 - July 2023



In August, we bid a heartfelt farewell to Ted Tuthill, our Charity Operations Manager, as he embarked on a new chapter overseas with his family. Ted's invaluable expertise, unwavering support, compassion, and dedication to our team, volunteers, and Home-Start families have left a lasting impression. Thank you Ted.

Our Trustees 2022 - 2023

Deirdre Edwards

Sue Saunders

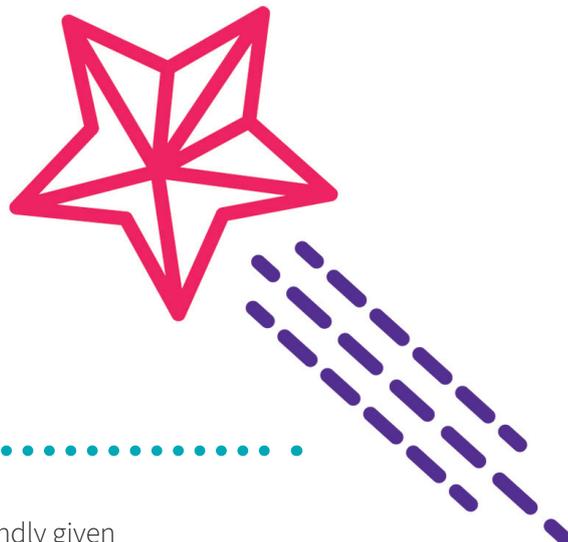
Lin Griffiths

Max Helmore

Selina Kermode

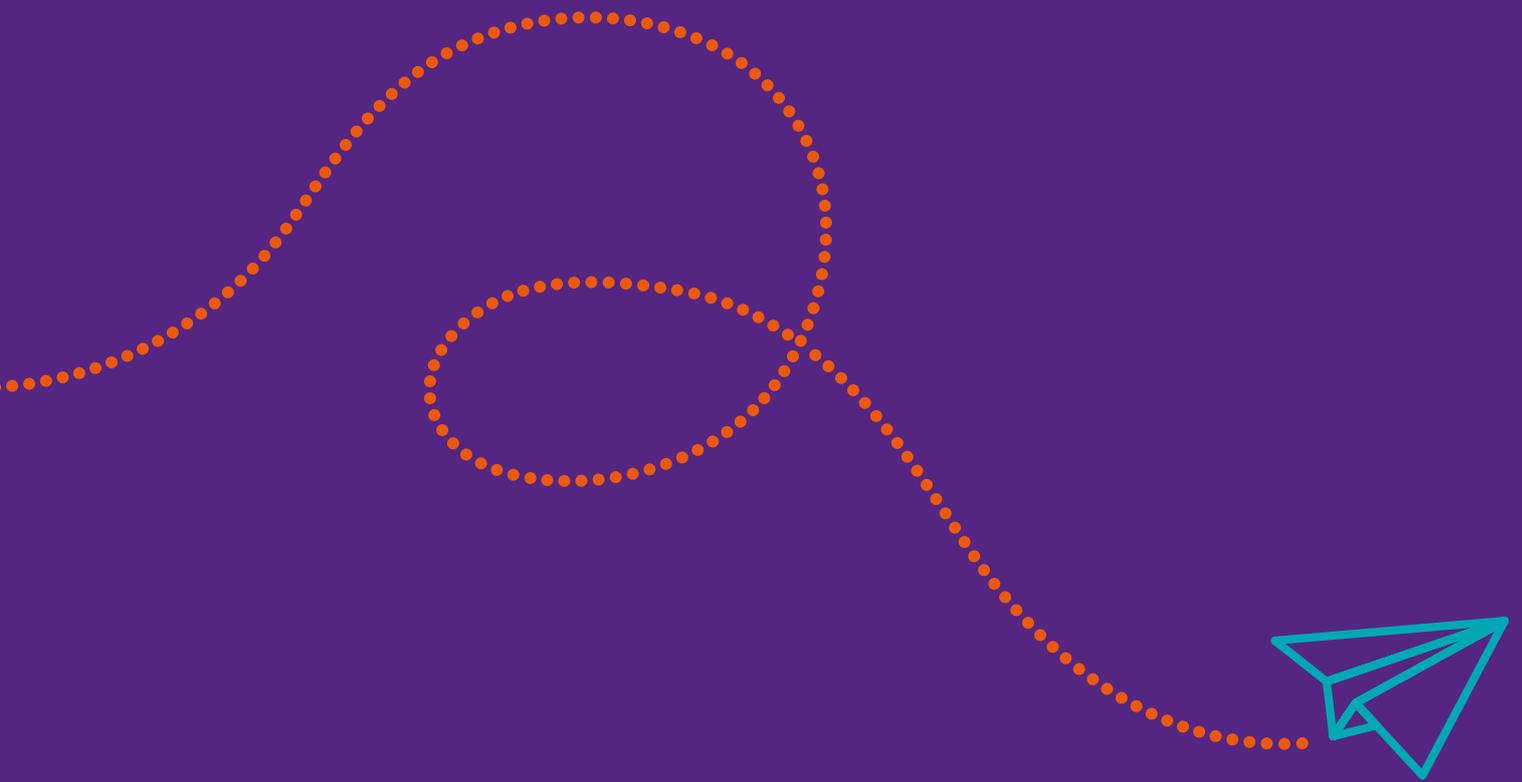
Larry Pontefract

Alex Anderson



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Liz Rogers Mills (LRM HR Consultancy) who has kindly given her expertise and time to advise on HR matters.



Get in touch

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