

Antenatal Classes in West Somerset

Home-Start West Somerset identified that families in the area were having to travel over 30 miles for antenatal classes and due to transport and time constraints many families were missing out on this essential support.

Home-Start contacted Skill Up West Somerset for support in finding the most appropriate training and funding opportunities to enable their staff and volunteers to undertake antenatal training so that they could then deliver local classes to families in West Somerset.

Skill Up West Somerset worked with West Somerset & Taunton Council to identify local funding incentives and Taunton & Somerset NHS Foundation Trust to explore what training would meet both the needs of Home-Start staff, volunteers and the wider Somerset maternity services for a coordinated approach.

In November 2019, a **successful pilot** was delivered, with **the Real Birth Company** delivering the training in West Somerset for **11 individuals** which included Home-Start staff and volunteers as well as Midwives working across West Somerset.

The first “delivery” of ante natal sessions by **Home Start West Somerset** was able to take place in a local company Shearwell, as the company had 4 expecting mums working there and the management team felt Shearwell could facilitate this support for its expectant employees.

Since then, this pilot has been rolled out across Somerset. Home Start are **currently supporting 40 expectant mums**, and during the Covid-19 pandemic have been able to continue to provide antenatal support by offering online drop-in Zoom sessions.

Following the success of the initial pilot in West Somerset, more Home Start organisations across the UK are looking at the West Somerset model for their own areas. **August 2020**



Home Start West Somerset is now providing a much-needed service of antenatal classes and ante natal drop-in sessions for all expectant parents in West Somerset. These Bump to Baby

sessions are ratified ante natal classes and Home Start staff and volunteers have been training alongside qualified midwives with the Real Birth Training programme in order to provide a credible ante natal course covering all the aspects of labour and the practical care of their new-born baby.

Clare Pound, Manager/Senior Family Support Co-ordinator,



“... I can only see this as having a positive impact on the whole of West Somerset. By having mobile and fully trained antenatal support across the district, issues of transport and long distance travelling are reduced, new parents and babies have a better start, Home-Start can provide a wider range of services and businesses can have “in house” support for their staff.”

Beccy Brown, Employment and Skills Lead, Somerset West and Taunton Council



“Our community midwives have historically delivered antenatal classes but in recent times, due to staffing

pressures and financial constraints, these classes have not been equitable across Somerset. It was identified that due to this, many staff were de-skilled or lacked confidence in delivering Birth Preparation classes. West Somerset staff will work with Homestart to deliver a holistic birth preparation class for local families, closing the gap between midwifery care and the voluntary sector activities and ensuring all are saying/doing the same thing which supports improved education for women and equity of service.” **Sally Bryant, Transformation Lead Midwife Somerset LMS**



“We were delighted to be involved in this collaboration and really enjoyed the discussions from all attendees and watching their skills and confidence develop throughout the three days. Thoroughly enjoyable!”

Zoe Wright, Midwife

