

If 2017 is the year you are thinking of making a resolution, please consider helping one of the seven Home-Starts in Greater Manchester

It's that time of year when people are thinking about resolutions and supporting charities often springs to mind for lots of people.

If January is a month where you start to think about wanting to make a difference then please think about Home-Start as there are so many ways in which you can lend a hand.

All seven Home-Starts across Greater Manchester will be running volunteer training courses throughout 2017 for local people with parenting experience to become home-visiting volunteers, supporting families with a range of issues through a mix of practical and emotional support.

But there are many ways in which you can make a difference to Greater Manchester's leading family support charity. As a fundraiser, or as a trustee. If you have skills in IT, HR, Marketing, Business or Finance and would like to be involved in shaping the future of Home-Start in Greater Manchester, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

But don't take our word for it, here's what one volunteer trustee said about Home-Start. "When I was 60 I sold my business and retired. I had all these plans for the golf course, DIY and holidays. But after a year or so, the novelty soon wore off, and I became bored. I regretted retiring, and I kind of lost track of who I was. I became frustrated, I had no idea of what to fill my time with.

The days dragged and I remember thinking that I had no idea just how many more months I could take of this. One day, I was walking down my local High Street, (the wife had sent me out to do some shopping), and I stopped and looked in the window of a community centre. There was a Trustee recruitment advert for a charity called Home-Start and they were looking for people with a range of skills including finance to help oversee the charity.

Volunteering was something that I'd never even considered, I didn't know anyone who volunteered so it had never crossed my mind. I pondered for a few days and spoke to my wife, she convinced me that I had nothing to lose by finding out more. I made the phone call and I can honestly say I have never looked back.

I became the Treasurer of my local Home-Start and I have been in that role for the last seven years. Sometimes in life we have to remember that getting that 'feel good factor' doesn't involve money, expensive trips and material objects. Sometimes just being able to give your time and skills for free to a cause that genuinely appreciate what you do for them is more than enough. I would recommend volunteering for Home-Start to anyone, because it makes a difference to families and we can all relate to that."

To find out more about Home-Start in Greater Manchester, please visit www.gmhomestarts.org.uk