**2024 REPORT FOR PARISH APM: SVP CHESS VALLEY ACTIVITIES**

Website***:*** <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/rickmansworth/parish-groups/svp/>

Contact: **ChessValleySVP@gmail.com**

**Current Membership**

Full members: 17 Auxiliary members: 5

**Ongoing Local Work**

**Visits** – Visits to the elderly or homebound take place where this is requested and needed.

**Material financial assistance given through the year in the local area**:

* Help with electricity and gas payments.
* Furniture and furnishings needed for a parent and child in need.
* For those moving into sheltered accommodation we were able to supply a microwave and cooker, fridge freezer, items of furniture, bed linen, towels, pots and pans and food vouchers. SVP members helped with putting up a bed and curtains.
* Help with much needed warm winter bedding and car tax payment.

We keep in touch with beneficiaries should they need further help.

**Community Lunch**

We hope to resume our popular Community lunch on 17th March. The lunch will be held on the 3rd Sunday of each month. Details will be in the Parish Newsletter. We are now able to host this lunch in the **Church Hall** at **St John the Evangelist, Mill End** as the kitchen has been refurbished. We look forward to parishioners from the three parishes attending when they are able to do so.

**Food Bank**

SVP members coordinate the collection and delivery of needed food items for the Mill End Food Bank. We regularly update the list of what is needed in the Parish Newsletter. There are donation boxes in the church porch in each of the three parishes for parishioners to make their contributions.

**Warm Space**

In October 2022 we set up a Warm Space in the Church Hall in St John’s Mill End. This continued until the end of June 2023 and restarted in October 2023 and will continue to the end of April 2024. We were able to secure a Caritas grant to cover our costs. We now have our regular visitors who enjoy the warmth, hot drinks, tea cakes and good company.

**Chess Valley Twinning**

**India:** We continue to support a twinned SVP Conference in Andhra Pradesh State on the east coast of India, through prayer, communication and an annual donation.

**India - Education**:  Two sponsorships (a Higher Education student and a class of 30 students) come to an end in July 2024. We have sponsored another student for 1 year from Dec 2023 and vocational training for 1 student from July 2023. All Sponsorship is paid for annually.

**Twinning One-off Donations**

**Sudan and South Sudan:**

This year separate appeals for funds have been launched for Sudan and South Sudan. **Sudan** is embroiled in a resurgence of conflict resulting in 24.7 million people in urgent need of assistance. SVP has partnered with Concern Worldwide using past funds to help address acute malnutrition in displaced children in Red Sea state. Donations from the current appeal cannot be used until hostilities cease. If this is not possible the funds will be transferred to South Sudan.

In **South Sudan** the main challenges are of influx of refugees from the war in Sudan and the impact of failed rains on crops. Six SVP projects in South Sudan are continuing:

* A baby and young children feeding centre,
* St Vincent Be in Hope Street Children project,
* Healthcare Centre,
* Vocational Training Centre, and
* Rations for needy families.

Over the last year we have donated £1000 and asked that this be used where it is most needed.

**Ukraine Disaster Fund Appeal:** We have donated £500 to this fund in the past year.

**India:**

* Last year we supported the setting up of a Skill Enhancement and Micro Enterprise Project, (**Quilon project**) implemented in 20 villages in the Allapuzha and Kollam districts situated in Kerala, South-West India and aimed at helping the women in these areas to generate income through training and development of micro-enterprise industries. This is one of SVP National’s largest community-based projects to date in India and involves Women. SVP conferences in these areas will be responsible for project implementation. The project is now underway and the first 16 female trainees (aged 20-55) have undergone orientation and training and will receive their small grants for adopting a new livelihood in the following areas: fish vending, poultry farming and garment making.
* This year we have also sponsored two new buffalo projects in Andhra Pradesh, South-East India. Young buffalos are provided to 10 families in each project for rearing so they can generate some additional income for their daily needs. The intention is that each of the families rears the young buffalo for subsequent sale or for breeding and to provide dairy products. The proceeds are used as additional income for the families.

**In May l**ast year SVP members made a **pilgrimage** to St Alban's Abbey to pray the Rosary for all those they serve both locally and abroad.

**Finance:**

**Income:** Member’s donations and your regular donations via the SVP boxes and in other ways you donate generate our income. We had one fundraising event last year, the SVP stall at the OLHC Advent Fair, at which we raised £486.20. We regularly host monthly coffee after the 8.30am Mass at OLHC and we receive donations from those who attend. The SVP National Raffle last summer raised £412.86 for your Chess Valley Conference.

**Our Expenditure:** In 2023 Chess Valley SVP spent a total of approximately £9600.00 on our ongoing projects and one-off financial aid assistance.

If you wish to make a donation towards the work we do this can either be done through the SVP boxes in each of the parishes, sending a cheque payable to Chess Valley SVP to The Treasurer, Chess Valley SVP c/o Our Lady Help of Christians or making an online donation. Details of our account are available on Our Lady Help of Christian’s website, Parish Groups, Chess Valley SVP.

**In September this year, the Chess Valley SVP Conference will have been serving across the three Parishes and in the local area for 10 years. THANK YOU for all your prayers, donations and practical support that you give us enabling us to continue with our work. Please continue to pray for us and for the people whom we serve.**