

Good Shepherd Parish SVP Update

The year from March 2019 - March 2020 was a very busy one for the SVP. Before the lockdown in March, with your generous donations we were able to give practical help to people in need in our Parish. We were able to deliver furniture to 33 homes and provided 41 electrical appliances – reconditioned cookers, fridges, freezers, washing machines and tumble driers to people in need in addition to clothes, bedding, baby equipment, curtains and rugs to refugees, asylum seekers and homeless people. We provided Christmas gifts to 69 families and financially helped and supported families who needed accommodation.

The SVP spent 3,500 hours visiting the sick, the elderly and the lonely in the Parish and have assisted refugees and asylum seekers settle into a life in England providing furniture and white goods for their homes, bedding, clothes and school uniforms in addition to practical help, support and advice.

Since the lockdown we have spent much time supporting two homeless men. We provided them with the bond and the first month's rent and settled them into a house which we furnished. One of our members sorted out their benefits and found a doctor for them and helped them manage their finances and in the case of one of the homeless men getting him the help he needed for his alcohol addiction. We provided them with food, clothes, bedding, towels, shoes and electrical goods, including a TV. Once settled in the house we introduced them to the food bank. Establishing these homeless men in accommodation has proved most successful and we have begun work with two other homeless men sorting out benefits etc. We have enough money left to provide a bond and rent to house two more men.

In March, the country went into lockdown and so did the SVP! Visits to our regular beneficiaries had to stop in an attempt to stop the spread of the virus. Although our regular work was curtailed, we have still been able to help a lot of people in the community. Schools remained open for the children of key workers and the vulnerable, Headteachers in our Primary schools were able to contact us for help. We were able to provide money, vouchers, shopping and school uniforms for poor families.

Hopefully, with a vaccine just around the corner, we will be back in business soon.

SVP Christmas Appeal 2020

With the lockdown, there has been an increase in poverty as people have lost their jobs or have had reduced hours. There are a lot of local children who will not get Christmas presents and we would like to help them.

We would like to collect new toys for children from 3 months to 12 years. We will have a box at the back of church for donations. If you could buy a gift for a child, it would be gratefully received. There is no need to wrap it. Church is open for private prayer (for times of opening, please see the Parish newsletter online) and donations can be left at the back of church then.

These gifts will be used for the poorest children in our area and for the children in the women's refuge.

Thank you for your kindness and generosity. Have a Happy and Holy Christmas.

God bless.

Your SVP