Anglo-Indian Concern
Registered Charity No 1015136

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2024

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AIC VISIT TO CHENNAI

Kirsten and Jude who are AIC trustees visited their partner charity VCT in Chennai in January/February this year. They wanted to observe what is happening now and build closer relationships following the long break in visits caused by Covid. Stephanie Brown joined them and has helped write this newsletter.

It was an immense privilege to be able to visit the VCT office and see the team at work. The team is fabulous - their skills involve kindness, humour, and compassion. They are loyal to the people they serve, true to the principles they are trying to achieve and show commitment to their faith. All those clients we met were overwhelmingly thankful for the support of VCT and it was inspirational to see how this support can benefit so many and is transformational to the individuals and their families. The travelling was at times hair-raising, and the food was delicious, but we all came back with a renewed understanding of the difficulties and blessings of working in India.

VCT TRUSTEES



The trustees meet twice a year but are available to the office team via WhatsApp chat for any questions or more urgent concerns. David Shrimpton - Chair; Cynthia Ignatius has served a long time and wishes to step down; Ramachandra Murthy (Ram) - experience of HR and finance; and Paul Thompson. Their next meeting will be about budget setting, and they would like to appoint another trustee, but this is not straight forward in India. Both Ram and Paul are members of the POTW church with David so they would like to appoint someone from outside of this organization.

AIC TRUSTEES

Please note the new change of postal address for AIC. Rachel Thurley had a small stroke at the end of 2023 and has delegated some responsibilities, but she assures you all that she will still reply to letters.

These are the Trustees of AIC with their responsibilities: Jude Lechmere (Chair); Roz Brench (Treasurer); Kirsten Masson (students' sponsorship); Matthew Gunton; Suzanne Hamilton; Sarah Thurley; Rachel Thurley – founder. Stephanie Brown has offered to become a trustee following her visit to India and help Rachel with the newsletter.

HOW AIC HELPS OLDER PEOPLE



Andrew* is 75 years old and lives in a small dwelling on top of the owner's house and is paying three thousand rupees rent. His house consists of bamboo and corrugated metal sheets and the roof is tar sheets which melt in the heat, patched with plastic and ropes and it leaks when it rains. He gets breathless and dizzy on the stairs which are steep. The water tap and toilet are downstairs. A few local boys carry his water upstairs for him. Andrew has a Calor gas stove. His health is not good as he does not get enough regular food, but his neighbours and friends prepare occasional meals for him. Grace and John have encouraged him to consider an old people's home which they have links with, but Andrew is determined to stay in his house which has been his home for 10 years and he says he is happy there. He is in an Anglo-Indian dominated area and wants to stay with his friends around him. He has a special lady friend nearby who is suffering from cancer. He attends Christchurch nearby.



HOW AIC HELPS STUDENTS

The Taylor* family have started receiving support from VCT recently. Dad dropped out of education at eighth standard (equivalent to UK year 9) and now does housekeeping jobs. Noah* (9) started school, but his parents were unable to continue paying fees during COVID for more than a year. As a result, he dropped out of school. VCT intervened and paid his fees, so he restarted school in the middle of the academic year. He is average at school but struggles with his writing skills. Grace encouraged him to work harder. Katy* (4) is at pre-school. It is likely that Mum is the subject of domestic abuse. Her mother-in-law, with whom they all live, treats her badly requiring her to stay at home all day doing housework. When the family came to the office at 10:30 am none of them had eaten breakfast. Food aid was provided to Mum for the family. We asked if this aid is always used for food and the office staff said this had not been an issue to date and they monitor how it is spent as closely as they can.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:



- New Trustees for VCT and closer working with AIC trustees following the visit from the UK.
- The Election in India this year April/May time. There is fear that the present government if re-elected will make education more difficult to access for the poor.
- Funding to increase particularly for seniors.
- Wisdom for the AIC trustees meeting in April discussing budgets, finances and succession planning for trustees and staff.

Thank you all for your support this year – Rachel and the AIC Trustees

*Names have been changed to protect identity.