

It's certainly been a strange year and as I have not been able to come personally to Oxted to give you all an update on the work *Their Voice* has done over the year, I hope this email will highlight some of our work and I would be grateful if you could share it with those who would be interested.

On behalf of all at Their Voice, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

We certainly have seen a turbulent year but have been greatly encouraged by being able to remain open throughout lockdowns where demand on our service picked up dramatically. Due to Government restrictions and volunteer safety our volunteer workforce has been depleted and I can only say it was through God's grace and strength we have managed to help so many families during this year.

Our outreach work to the community in providing essential products free of charge is a tangible way of easing financial pressures for those who either cannot afford or easily access items needed. We have received over 1325 requests for help and the need to supply essential toiletries has increased by 300% this year. As this following story illustrates some of the hardships our clients suffer:

Elda became a single mum due to the exploitation she suffered, she gave birth to her daughter who suffered from severe colic, mum has limited movement and she has no network of support. This year had taken its toll on mum with lack of sleep, living in shared emergency accommodation and past trauma causing her mood to be low and suffering from anxiety. Due to issues with accessing services she was unable to provide herself and daughter with warm clothing and was reduced to cutting the feet out of the baby grows and had no toys to help with her daughter's development, this was causing Mum visible distress. At *Their Voice* we were able to provide a pack of beautiful, high-quality donated clothing, lovely, age-appropriate toys, nappies, dummies and wet wipes. Mum also received a large bag of essential hygiene products, winter clothing, along with some lovely bath products to promote self-care.

These gifts had a positive impact on Mum, her mental health and demeanour changed as she was no longer desperately trying to source winter clothing for herself and her daughter. This support enabled Mum to have head space to focus on her emotional wellbeing and health which is helping to facilitate her ongoing recovery.

In October of this year we moved to new premises, the old Cricket Pavilion on Caterham on the Hill. We are delighted with our new place and thank God for his faithfulness and provision.

As Christmas approached we teamed up with a local school in which a local family purchased Christmas gifts for the children of a family who have had their lives touched by Modern Slavery. We have been able to support over 80 children with presents it was also a way to raise awareness of Modern Slavery. On delivery of these presents we have received feedback on what a difference they will make giving Mum and children a little joy at Christmas.

Our work at the safe house continues and last Wednesday we managed to drop off Christmas presents for the children and the women. One of the women who had recently been rescued and given birth, told me she was taken to the safehouse by an elderly couple from the Salvation Army who told her that from that day her life was going to change. I have spent time with her, she is a Christian and it has been so encouraging to share verses with her from the Bible to give her hope and that God is love and wants the best for her. We have been able to provide a lot of practical help for her in respect of baby and personal items, she had absolutely nothing when she arrived. I stand in awe of how God uses people to tell and show them of His Great Love.

Blessings

Carolyn Thom  
CEO of Their Voice

[www.theirvoicemodernslavery.org.uk](http://www.theirvoicemodernslavery.org.uk)

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