



The Joe Homan Charity
... bringing joy and hope to children



Members Letter 69

11 December 2017

Dear Member,

It is time that I brought you up to date with what has been happening at the Charity since our Annual General Meeting in October.

Our new Board of Trustees has been working hard with the recruitment company Charity People to recruit a new Manager for JHC and I am delighted to report that we have been successful in making an outstanding appointment.

Alex Lind, our newest Trustee, John Bowman, Geoff Foster and Arun Chinnaraj spent an exhausting two days in London interviewing and listening to proposals from 5 shortlisted candidates out of the 150 applications Charity People received.

Russell Smith organised several WebEx telephone conferences to co-ordinate the responses of the rest of us and as a result we had a unanimous decision on whom to appoint.

The new Manager who will start at the beginning of March is Dr Kemal James Shaheen and he will work closely with Jon Crouch until Jon retires at the end of April.

Kemal lives in Bicester near Oxford and was awarded a First Class degree in Social and Political Sciences at Jesus College Cambridge in 1998. He then worked for the Spastics Society in Mumbai before embarking on research in Tamil Nadu and Mumbai on barriers to participation by Dalit communities in India. He was awarded his doctorate for this research in 2007. Since then he has worked as CEO of Village Aid in Derbyshire - a small charity working in African countries and he has continued volunteering for children's charities in Tamil Nadu helping them develop funding proposals to extend their work with marginalised communities.

He has a huge enthusiasm for the work Joe has done and for JHC as a whole and was over the moon to be offered the job. He is committed to continuing to work within the ethos of JHC while seeking to improve our fundraising income and also developing new projects for our possible support.

The Board of Trustees has also reorganised since the AGM and John Bowman has taken over as Vice Chairman. Geoff Foster is the new Treasurer and Jon himself will, short term, take over the role of Company Secretary. My own involvement is inevitably becoming more remote as my illness continues but I am happy to work behind the scenes until I have to give up.

Both Jon and Geoff reported on our financial position at the AGM, copy of the Project Update and Looking Ahead presentation was sent to Members at the end of October 2017. Our financial position, also reported in our Annual Accounts, over the last few years, has been that expenditure had overtaken income by a margin that could not last. We have rising costs and falling income and need to balance our accounts to ensure the hundreds of very poor, disadvantaged children we assist receive great support from JHC with a lasting impact on their lives.

To this end JHC has agreed with partner NGOs overseas, reduced financial support during the next three years. In some cases this does mean reduction in overall project support and reduction in the actual number of children we can help. Jon will be discussing this with our partner NGOs during his last official visit to Tamil Nadu in January, this to ensure the NGOs clearly understand the financial support position of JHC and that they can tailor their own support to the needy children without losing the high levels of care now in place.

I am pleased to report that with the correct planning in place we will slowly get to the point where we can balance our annual budgets and continue the work of JHC beyond fifty years. The fact that we still have healthy reserves is a huge tribute to Jon and his careful control.

The Joe Homan Memorial Fund now stands at over £42k and if you would like to contribute to it please go to <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fund/JHMF>. You will remember that Boys Town Society have made a significant donation to this and that it is intended to help develop the Tirumangalam campus. In fact we have

just received from Dr Raja some costed plans for improvements to Tirumangalam Boys Town, Inner Wheel Girls Town and Rengesamy Children's Village so we hope that this work can start almost immediately.



We have also received an update on the Francois Meyer Matriculation School in Tirumangalam.



The new term started with almost 300 children and 25 staff and apart from one of the buses breaking down and needing extensive repairs the school is making very good progress and is obviously gaining a good reputation in the area. A very extensive cultural programme complements the teaching and the children have enjoyed many visits out of the classroom.



The other Non Government Organisations we support in Tamil Nadu continue their work with children and Gopi at our Dindigul office has been sending out communications to sponsors, both for the new school year, and Diwali. We will send you reports on the NGO's we support at the end of their school year.



An excellent annual report from Raju the General Secretary of SPPD shows just what a small NGO in a very poor area can achieve and is even more impressive in the extent they are harnessing local funds to support their work.



The Thailand Boys Project maintains the good work in support of secondary level boys. The additional fundraising coming from Australian donors and volunteers is helping and we are very pleased to see a new Mushroom Shed now being built. Read about this directly at <https://www.facebook.com/projectboystown/>

I hope those of you who have access to social media, particularly Facebook will have noticed the growing presence we now have. The next generation of supporters who have been encouraged and supported by Deborah Weatherall are really making a difference now and the next phase of this will be to use social media to raise new funding from non-traditional supporters, and seek out volunteers to work at the supported projects, particularly younger people.



The picture of the children praying at Joe's memorial garden at the Guest House in Tirumangalam on the occasion of the anniversary of Joe's death is also on the BTS and JHC Facebook sites.

Jon often has invites to speak to others about the work of JHC, but time and distance often stops that happening. We have now put a standard charity talk on social media as an introduction. You might be interested to watch this on YouTube at - <https://youtu.be/8DOCEy0H8DE> or can be seen at Google Drive - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qiuNQeO4r7b2RKvh97FT1jXleB6nnF7R/view?usp=sharing>

Jon will also send you a hard copy of the talk if you contact him.

As Members, sponsors and supporters we have done a fantastic job of supporting children for many years, let's continue that work at this difficult time. You might be able to introduce friends and family to further your support of JHC, or be able to introduce JHC to a Trust or Club.

I do hope you have a relaxing and enjoyable Christmas. With all good wishes,

Peter Church Chairman JHC