



## FAITH AND SOCIAL ACTION AT ST ANDREW'S MAGAZINE

WITH UPDATES ON THE CHARITIES WE SUPPORT

# SPRING ISSUE

## APRIL 2026



Children receiving breakfast – Garden Route Children's Trust

So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and steady,  
always enthusiastic about the Lord's work, for you know  
that nothing you do for the Lord is ever  
useless.

1 Corinthians 15.58

Dear Friends

There is a well-known story of a man who handed out Christian tracts for years in Sydney, Australia. Many people came to Christ through those leaflets and his words, but he never knew it. A London preacher who kept encountering people who had come to Christ thanks to this man wanted to speak to him and he managed to track him down to a small apartment in Sydney. The frail old man listened with tears running down his cheeks as the preacher told him about all the people whose lives he had changed. 'I've been doing this for forty years,' said the old man, 'and I haven't heard of a single person coming to Jesus until today.'

I haven't fact-checked this story but it certainly expresses a truth about the life of serving Jesus. There are many times when we don't see any results from our efforts to serve the Lord. But we should not be tempted to give in to discouragement because we do not know what God is doing out of our sight. There is a great deal of joy in knowing that nothing we do for the Lord is ever wasted.

It is my pleasure to bring you our Spring edition of the St Andrew's Faith and Social Action magazine in which we hear from the leaders of the charitable projects which our church – you, in other words – supports. The good work continues and a particular success was the OM Quiz Night in January, which raised a clear £1233 for our projects! **Local Cobham merchants were very generous in donating prizes and a big shout out goes to ABC Dental who donated £350 to the costs of the evening. Big thanks also go to The Ivy, Moonflower, Del Posto, Coppa Club, Kinjo, Painshill, and The Cobham Garden Club.**

David Taylor's talk 'Faith and Social Action in Victorian Cobham: Matthew Arnold at Painshill Cottage' which had to be postponed will now take place on Friday 19 June 2026, and we very much look forward to that (tickets from the parish office).

May God bless you in all your work for Him, even if you do not see the results,

*Charleen*

**Rev. Charleen Hollington**

Associate Minister

Chairperson, Faith and Social Action Committee

# OPERATION MOBILISATION HIMALAYAS

Report from Peter Kelly, champion for OM Himalayas



Picture: Kathmandu

## **ST ANDREW'S INCREASES ITS GIVING TO OM**

The spring has brought cool, windy and wet weather to Nepal, with some areas experiencing snow. But right now, OM teams are able to travel and meet with people in all the villages and areas they serve.

In East-central Nepal, the teams are in the midst of visiting every municipality in 2026 with the goal of having at least one fellowship in each municipality. The teams in south-central Nepal are planning to welcome new members as wives of two of the OM workers are pregnant, and they ask for our prayers for their health and safety. In southwestern Nepal, the teams are trying a new approach to fellowship meetings, by providing childcare during times when adults come together. This has increased attendance and they ask for prayers for growing this outreach.

In the far northwest of Nepal, in some of the most remote regions, local fellowships are struggling for lack of leadership and many people who had expressed interest in the work of OM have become disengaged. Pray for the leadership of OM to consider how best to maintain levels of contact in order to

be a support and encouragement to some of the most remote people they serve.

In the northeast of Nepal, the OM team serves people groups who are nomadic. Much of this ministry is delivery of minor medical care and supplies. Please pray for the success of this vital outreach to a very isolated people.

Finally, the St Andrews PCC, on the advice of the Outward Giving committee, agreed to increase the church's regular giving to OM to £2,600 p.a. Ben (the OM director in Nepal) has responded with great joy at the increase as well as at the success of the fundraising efforts of the FASAC. He shares that the team there pray with gratitude and love very regularly for the St. Andrew's church family and wishes to tell everyone that the interactions and support mean a great deal to them, providing encouragement while also affirming and confirming the work that they are doing.

#### **Prayer points**

Please pray for -

- ✓ *The fruitfulness of all the projects, programmes, activities, outreach and mission and community work by OM described in this report;*
- ✓ *The safety of the pregnant wives of OM workers; for their protection from illness and harm, and safe delivery of healthy infants.*

***If you would like to learn more, connect directly with the ministry or make a financial contribution to OM, please contact Peter Kelly at [pjk207@me.com](mailto:pjk207@me.com).***

# TRANSFORMING LIVES FOR GOOD

Report from Carrie Taylor, St Andrew's project champion for TLG



## ST ANDREW'S TLG TEAM GET A POSITIVE ANNUAL REVIEW

The New Year started with our TLG Sunday church service. We were so pleased to be able to include a short video of Solomon, a pupil at St Andrew's Primary School, sharing about his year of coaching with Nigel Goddard, one of our TLG volunteers. Solomon, his parents and the school all voiced their thanks for the intervention and how it had helped to feel more positive about himself and school life. It was great to welcome Stina, headteacher at St. Andrew's, who shared her enthusiasm for the work of TLG with pupils at the school.

The following week we had our Annual Review, which was an encouraging time reviewing the past year with the Stina, the coaches and Mike and looking forward with vision for the year ahead.

Our prayer continues to be for more coaches to join the team and for children, families and members of the school team to be impacted by the love of God through the work of our TLG coaches.

### Prayer points:

Please pray –

✓ *For children at the school who are experiencing problems, at home or at school;*

✓ *For more coaches to come forward.*

***If you are interested in becoming a coach please speak to Carrie. via [parishoffice@sac.church](mailto:parishoffice@sac.church).***

# OASIS FREEDOM PROGRAMME FOR DOMESTIC ABUSE

Report from David Greenwood, standing in for David Taylor, project champion for Oasis

## DAVE GREENWOOD SHOCKED BY UK DOMESTIC ABUSE FIGURES

OASIS ran an Awareness session in March for an audience of people from various organisations, schools and services in the area including councillors, our local NHS and the Police. I was invited in my role as Clerk of Cobham Combined Charities (we partner OASIS in other programmes).

The facts revealed in the opening warm-up quiz were, well, shocking. FOR EXAMPLE:

- In Britain, around 2 women are killed by a violent partner or former partner every week;
- It is estimated that 25 percent of women experience domestic abuse in their lifetime;
- 2.1 million people across England and Wales experienced domestic abuse in 2023;
- In 2023, 16.2% percent of all offences recorded were domestic abuse related;
- Over 800,000 children experienced domestic abuse in 2023;
- In homes where children are living, 90 percent of incidents involving domestic violence occur with children in the same or next room;
- 49 percent of girls between the ages of 13 and 17 have experienced violent or controlling behaviour in a relationship (*this was the most shocking to me – what kind of young men is our society creating?*)

The final question gave us six tick box options.

- Domestic abuse happens because of:
  - Drink
  - Drugs
  - Stress
  - Mental illness
  - Unemployment
  - Power and control

Most of us wanted to tick all of them. However the Counsellors told us that the underlying reason was “Power & Control – the rest are all excuses”.

The input from the OASIS counsellors and videos was eye-opening but the real emotional impact was from a number of brave women and children who spoke of their own personal experiences.

Often the coercive control is subtle, rather than violent (though it can reach that stage) and victims may not even realise it is happening to them for a long time. Some people experienced similar as children and don't know life role models that are any different when they in turn are the adults. School may be the first time a child realises their home life is not normal. The women are made to feel that everything is their fault and that they are useless such that they become isolated and feel powerless to protect themselves or their children. The children pick up the same messages about themselves.

Some people who have been through the Freedom Programme now help others through OASIS as well as still having to keep fighting their own battles for justice and/or safety.

Talking to one of them brought home just how much of a life-saver the programme is, giving many hope and a way through. It cannot wave a magic wand though: the women and children may no longer be living with the perpetrators, but family law is a complicated matter (rights of access etc) and some perpetrators still carry on intimidating in various – often very frightening - ways such that the families live constantly on edge and can never be totally “free”.

Through OASIS, victims become Survivors. There were many stories of “the systems” failing them but they are still Survivors. The Freedom Programme helps them cope, see a way through and gives them hope.

**Prayer points:**

Please pray –

✓ *For energy and vision for the Oasis team;*

✓ *For the very many Cobham families requiring assistance in these difficult days, whether this is through the Fresh Food Programme or where there is domestic abuse and other areas of social concern.*

***If you would like to make a donation or get involved in the Oasis Freedom project or any other work of Oasis, please contact David Taylor via [parishoffice@sac.church](mailto:parishoffice@sac.church).***

# FOODBANK

Report from Alison Greenwood, project champion for the Foodbank

## WAITROSE FACILITATE COLLECTION AGAIN

Cobham Area Foodbank is now in its 13<sup>th</sup> year. As usual, we are very grateful for the donations we receive from the public, so we are able to make a meaningful and lasting difference to so many lives.

From the start of the financial year, we have supported 1,209 people in our community – including 829 adults and 380 children. During the calendar year, 22,342.63kg of food was generously donated through our collection points, with 23,250.17kg distributed to those facing crisis. With demand exceeding donations, financial contributions and essential food donations help us continue supporting local families when they need us most.

In the lead-up to Christmas, we were able to make up and donate 59 Christmas hampers (Christmas boxes) and additionally provide fresh food bags containing a variety of fresh vegetables, fruit, eggs bought from our local market in Stoke D'Abernon and meats (chicken and gammon) from Goss Brothers Butchers in Oxshott High Street, meaning many families were able to enjoy a more hopeful and dignified Christmas.

We are also deeply grateful to the agencies and organisations that work alongside us to identify families in crisis and issue food vouchers. These include the **Cobham Centre for the Community, PA Housing, Oasis, Esher Citizens Advice Bureau, Weybridge Jobcentre Plus**, and many others. Their ongoing support helps ensure that people in our community receive timely and compassionate assistance.



Low stocks prompted a collection outside Waitrose at the end of March, where those using the shop that day were asked to buy one or two extra items that they could donate to Foodbank. Thanks to the kindness and generosity of the local community, we collected an amazing **692kg of essential items – that's 89 crates of food and supplies.**

This will help us support local families in crisis over the next two to three weeks, providing vital practical help when it's needed most.

We were supported by the fantastic Waitrose team throughout the day, including with hot drinks! It really was a brilliant community effort and a reminder of how much people care.



Every item donated will go directly to people in our local area who are facing difficult circumstances. For many families, this support provides reassurance and stability at a time when it's needed most.

While this collection will make a real difference, the need for support doesn't stop here. **Our warehouse stock remains low** and we still rely on regular donations to ensure we can continue to support families over the coming weeks.

For those that would like to make financial contributions, you can donate directly into our [bank account](#). Details can be found on the website.

### **Prayer points**

Please pray that -

*✓Our community will continue to be generous financially and especially with food donations.*

*✓We find an accessible community space from which the warehouse and distribution centre can operate on the same site.*

# GARDEN ROUTE CHILDREN'S TRUST

Report from Paul Hurrell, project champion for the GRCT



## KITCHEN TABLE IDEA LEADS TO 20 YEARS OF FEEDING CHILDREN

The Garden Route Children's Trust is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2026. This is a remarkable milestone for a charity that was formed around a kitchen table in Penny and Patrick Fleming's house in Oxshott in 2006. Their vision was to help, feed and educate under-privileged children from poor communities in the areas surrounding Knysna in the Western Cape in South Africa. And so, The Garden Route Children's Trust was born.

Penny and Patrick stepped out in faith with a small group of friends who shared their Christian values, and initially they raised enough money to feed a few hundred children in the Knysna area. The food of choice was e'Pap, a vitamin and mineral enriched porridge-like product that is easy to prepare and feed to little ones at the start of each school day. Peter and Shelley Godsell, who live in Knysna, helped with the distribution of e-Pap into pre-schools through a small team of volunteers.

The tangible results from providing the children with a nourishing meal of e'Pap each morning were soon obvious as their concentration, retention and general health improved rapidly. This encouraged the trustees to broaden their scope, and over the years the GRCT expanded from Knysna to Cape Town, Kleinmond, Wellington and even beyond into the interior of the country. Through prayer and faith, more donors came on board each year and now the charity feeds close to 9,000 children every day. Over the past 20 years, the GRCT has fed tens of thousands of children, many of whom are now adults with families of their own.

It has been an incredible journey and to celebrate its amazing achievements, the GRCT will be holding a number of special events during 2026. These will be advertised widely so keep a lookout for more information in the next few months.

### **Prayer Points**

*✓ Loving God, we give thanks for the vision shared by Patrick and Penny Fleming 20 years ago, and for answering all their prayers for support. Thank you for blessing the GRCT with generous and faithful donors who have helped realise the vision of our charity. We pray that all the special events planned in 2026 will be joyful, well supported and will raise enough funds to be able to feed even more children*

*✓ We pray for the children and communities we serve: may they know hope, opportunity and the comfort of your loving presence. Guide us as we continue this work and help us to be faithful stewards of the gifts entrusted to us.*

**If you would like to learn more about the GRCT or make a financial contribution to the GRCT, please contact Paul Hurrell (paulh@sac.church).**

