

## **Christmas Report 2019**

The VSL Christmas Project 2019 supported over 2400 people with the help of the whole community. We had volunteers of all ages and backgrounds coming together once again showing how strong the goodwill of the Lewisham Community is to make Christmas a happier time. Without the help of volunteers this project would not be the success it is year on year. Our Christmas volunteers helped in many different ways: date checking and sorting donated goods, wrapping hampers, supporting other volunteers, supermarket collections, data input, delivering out hampers or supporting the Christmas day lunch. Thank you!

We are very grateful to local schools, nurseries, Lewisham churches and individuals who donated food, toys, books, supermarket vouchers, gift vouchers and money.

A big thank you to the Lewisham Salvation Army for letting us use their building and giving support and encouragement in many different ways.

Churches Together Sydenham and Forest Hill co- hosted the Christmas Day Lunch that saw people getting together who would otherwise spend Christmas by themselves.

### **Funding and in kind donations**

NCS -The Challenge supported our cake sale in Laurence House.

A number of shops championed us by hosting donation points:

Food donations could be left with the Co-op Crofton Park, Jay's Budgens and Sainsbury's in Lewisham. Argos Lee and Lewisham had toy donation boxes and the Tesco in Catford kindly let us collect toys and gifts for teenagers on 2 days.

We were one of three charities chosen for Waitrose, Beckenham's Community Affairs programme in November.

### **Volunteering**

52 Volunteers helped on a rota basis with all aspects, this included corporate volunteers from Regular Cleaning who helped move the project from VSL offices to the new venue in the Salvation Army. An employee from Refinitiv joined the project for the third year.

48 children and young people came to see the project and help out. Supporting the next generation into volunteering has become an integral part of the Christmas project.

### **Hampers, toys, vouchers in numbers**

90 food hampers for families with 5 or more family members were packed by Kings Church and distributed through VSL.

347 hampers were delivered to elderly and vulnerable/isolated service users.

319 families received £15 supermarket gift vouchers

828 children, teenagers and vulnerable young adults received a gift/voucher.

72 residents of a local hostel supporting people with mental health difficulties received gifts and toiletries.

5 crates of food for homeless unit

70 people attended the Christmas day lunch

15 people attended the Christmas Disco in the Grove Centre

We supported over 2400 people through the Christmas Project.

### **New Developments**

For the first time we were based in the Lewisham Salvation Army, in close vicinity to VSL offices. We had volunteers from Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network supporting our project.

### **Christmas Day Lunch and Christmas Disco**

The Christmas Day Lunch was held in Forest Hill Methodist Church, where Churches Together Forest Hill and Sydenham prepared a Christmas Day Lunch for 70 people. VSL driving volunteers helped to transport 60 people to and from the venue.

15 people attended the Christmas Disco in the Grove Centre.

### **Thank you to:**

**Ravensbourne Rotary Club**

**The Lee Charity of William Hatcliffe**

**Walker Books**

**Marsh Christian Trust**

**Souter Charitable Trust**

**Lewisham Parochial Charities**

**Waitrose, Beckenham**

**Tesco Bags of Life**

**...and the individual sponsors for their generous contributions**



(Above: Volunteers helping on the Christmas Project)

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