



SSVP SCOTLAND ANNUAL REPORT 1ST APRIL 2023 – 31ST MARCH 2024

INTRODUCTION

Greetings to all our Vincentian members, volunteers, donors, supporters, benefactors and beneficiaries.

The reporting period of 2023 – 24 was a time a time of challenge, commitment, compassion and celebrations for the Society. Due to ill health Danny Collins, SSVP Scotland, National President had to step back from duties for a number of months. This time was also besought by loss of his daughter, Jacqueline and was a very hard time for Danny and his family. Thankfully following two periods of hospitalisation Danny's health was restored and he was able to resume his role as National President towards the latter part of the year. Our thoughts and prayers remain with Danny that he may continue to enjoy good health and that his family and his daughter's family be comforted in their grief.

Fortunately as Vincentians, our spirit of commitment is something we are blessed with. Joe Maguire, Vice President, stepped into the breach when Danny was unable to carry out his presidential role. This enabled our work to continue without any impact on those we serve. A warm and grateful thanks go to Joe for this.

The same gratitude for generosity of spirit and kindness is extended to all our members, volunteers, donors and benefactors. Without whose support and commitment the Society could simply not do what it does 'to seek and find those who are forgotten, to bring Christ's love to the suffering or deprived and to give generously of their time, their possessions and themselves'. [extract from meeting opening prayers]

CHARTIABLE OBJECTIVES

SSVP Scotland is placed under the patronage of St Vincent de Paul and is inspired by his thinking and works. It seeks, in the spirit of justice, and charity, to help those who are suffering poverty in whatever form, irrespective of race, colour, creed, ideology or gender. It does this primarily through its voluntary membership who undertake befriending and through Special Projects which address a range of specific needs. The object of the charity as per its governing document is the relief of poverty, both material and emotional, in Scotland and abroad. The Society seeks to achieve this objective in four main ways:

- Through the person to person involvement of its members at Conference level who visit and provide assistance to those in need.

- Through its "Special Works", which are projects established to meet a specific local need and which are run by local committees accountable to the appropriate Group or Diocesan Council. Policy decisions and major investments relating to Special Works must be approved by the Board of Trustees in consultation with National Council.
- With the prior approval of the Trustees, members may pursue the Objectives of the Society by helping and supporting "Special Activities", which are projects that are not managed or controlled within the Society, but which share a common aim with the Society and members are directly involved in the management or operation of the project, while not having a controlling interest.
- Identifying the root causes of poverty and contributing to their elimination through its work for Social Justice.

CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES FOR 2023/24

- The maintenance of membership visits and assistance to individuals and families
- The maintenance of furniture provision
- The maintenance of holiday provision for disadvantaged families
- Maintain support overseas through the SSVP Twinning programme
- Continued development of the SSVP Youth programme
- Maintain the services available to beneficiaries through SSVP Ozanam Centres and Ozanam Clubs.
- Development of Social Justice collaboration

The following ensured that the objectives were met:

The maintenance of membership base to ensure visits and assistance to individuals and families:

- Ensuring that all volunteers comply with Safeguarding and complete the Disclosure Scotland - Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) checks when required.

The maintenance of furniture provision

- Ensuring sufficient investment in vans and premises in established areas

Holidays for disadvantaged families

Three dioceses (St Andrews & Edinburgh; Motherwell and Glasgow) who make holiday provision continued to assess the need and related cost. St Andrews & Edinburgh Archdiocesan Council continue to operate two caravans. Motherwell Diocesan Council review the need locally within Conferences, and respond as required. Glasgow Archdiocesan Council, continue to offer a dedicated Holiday Fund.

Maintain support overseas through the Twinning Programme

- Maintaining the number of twins supported through Twinning
- Maintaining support for Twinning Projects

Development of the SSVP Youth programme

The commitment to Youth is delivered nationally via the national Student Co-ordinator, and locally via Diocesan Councils.

Tutoring Clubs supporting primary children with Maths and Literacy skills have been further developed and a Learning Pack for new start-up groups is now available. Locally, within Dioceses, SSVP youth work has been further developed with increased collaboration with schools and others involved with youth work.

Development of Social Justice

Collaboration with other charities which share the same ethos and values of SSVP Scotland continues to be strengthened and developed. During 2023/24 active links were explored and developed in relation other organisations focusing on fuel and food related issues. A further project assessing work with Prisons/Prisoners is being look at.

SSVP SCOTLAND STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

The SSVP in Scotland is organised geographically in line with the 8 Catholic Arch/Dioceses in Scotland. Members of the Society, who are all volunteers, meet in small groups called 'Conferences', normally but not necessarily based at their local parish Catholic church. The SSVP welcomes all individuals who embrace our values of love, compassion and charity to help those who are in need whether it be financial, material or the poverty of loneliness / isolation.

All Arch / Diocesan Presidents are Trustees of the charity. Other Trustees include the National President and the National Treasurer. The National and Arch / Diocesan Presidents are elected by members. The National Treasurer is appointed by the National Treasurer from its serving members. The initial term of office for all roles is 3 years with 6 years being the maximum. Any member can stand to be elected for any position.

The structure of the society remained unchanged in 2023- 24 with only one Trustee change due to the Glasgow Archdiocesan President completing the end of his 6 years of service in February 2024.

POSITIONS HELD AT 1ST APRIL 2023 – 31ST MARCH 2024

Trustees & / or National Council Members

Danny Collins, National President (Trustee & National Council Member)

Joseph Maguire, Vice President & Glasgow Archdiocesan President (Trustee & National Council Member) – [Resigned February 2024]

Elizabeth Herlihy, Aberdeen Diocesan President (Trustee & National Council Member)

Sydney Grant, Dunkeld Diocesan President (Trustee & National Council Member)

Partick Snee, Galloway Diocesan President (Trustee & National Council Member)

Patricia McCartney Glasgow Archdiocesan President (Trustee [Appointed Feb 2024] & National Council Member) and also & Social Justice Coordinator

Partick Carr, Motherwell Diocesan President (Trustee & National Council Member)

Joseph Hendry Paisley Diocesan President (Trustee & National Council Member)

Haydn Carr-Pollock, St Andrew's & Edinburgh Archdiocesan President (Trustee & National Council Member)

Sr Maria Robb, Spiritual Director, (National Council Member)

Sean Murphy, National Student Coordinator (National Council Member)

National Council of Scotland (NCS)

The National Council of Scotland is made up of Arch/ Diocesan Presidents elected by SSVP Members from across the Diocese. Of the 8 Dioceses in Scotland 7 are represented as the Diocese of Argyll and the isles does not have a President. Danny Collins, National President leads the NCS which meets 6 times a year. Other appointments include the National Spiritual Adviser, Twinning and Twinning Projects Coordinator, Social Justice Coordinator and the Student Coordinator. All roles are unpaid voluntary roles and vitally important to the work of the Society in Scotland.

Scottish National Office

At the reporting year end the staffing complement comprised Office Manager (30 hours), 1 FT (30 hours) and 1 PT (12.5 hours) administration support workers. This was a depletion in the staffing composition of the National Office as unfortunately 2 staff members left in the early part of 2024. This resulted in the number of hours worked in the National Office being greatly reduced. As a consequence certain administration support had to be curtailed. One of the biggest impacts was the availability to respond daily to phone calls from members and those seeking assistance. The National Office continued and continues to be supported by long term volunteer, Liz Strachan, whose dedication and commitment to the Society we all benefit from.

Summary of Annual Accounts 01/04/23 to 31/03/24

Diocese	Opening Balance 1/04/2023	Relief	Dues	Twinning	All Payments Within SSVP	Expenses	Other Payments (External assistance)	Closing Balance 31/03/24
Aberdeen	27,959.19	30,206.45	3,380.00	1,300.00	3,179.70	968.55	1,450.00	35,270.67

St Andrew's & Edinburgh	510,448.63	215,798.83	38,991.80	10,830.00	38,608.41	6,143.20	16,429.43	575,837.02
Argyll & the Isles	2,763.60	5,598.93	406.00	280.00	200.00	164.59	0.00	4,078.97
Dunkeld	76,958.08	52,052.67	7,507.33	4,040.00	3,748.16	4,161.95	16,377.79	58,997.90
Galloway	64,771.21	108,703.31	11,444.00	8,490.00	8,398.14	2,801.03	4,050.00	62,872.62
Glasgow	424,542.23	283,704.53	30,272.57	13,816.84	58,435.40	11,721.89	32,287.48	530,838.92
Motherwell	296,152.84	390,536.36	49,619.92	19,205.00	70,732.04	21,485.86	12,381.88	317,998.21
Paisley	175,298.19	203,221.77	24,573.00	7,788.00	85,907.22	10,385.95	3,987.03	163,189.73
Diocesan Totals	1,578,893.97	1,289,822.85	166,194.62	65,749.84	269,209.07	57,833.02	86,963.61	1,749,084.04

SUMMARY REPORT OF CONFERENCE WORK WITHIN SCOTLAND

As at 31st March 2024 there were 239 SSVP Conference in Scotland totalling 1542 members.

Conferences which had not met since the lockdown reconnected and conference work resumed. They continued to adapt their service depending on local needs and local resource. Those working within parishes continued to visit the sick and elderly in their homes. This is much need and offers valuable support. The provision of financial and material help and supporting those who are lonely also remained a vital role played by members.

Aberdeen Diocese

Some Conferences, continued to benefit from produce from CFINE (Community Food Initiatives North East) for the food parcels they hand out. This includes fresh food, tinned food, and food near its best before date. Other Conferences also support the work of The Apostleship of the Sea mainly in the form of sweets and warm clothing.

Dunkeld Diocese

Throughout the year Conferences across the Diocese of Dunkeld raised funds for and continue to support refugees from Ukraine. Most Conferences work in conjunction with other help groups and there is always a range of cross referrals, with SSVP referring clients to other specialist groups and SSVP receiving referrals from these groups and often Social Services.

Conferences in the city of Dundee worked with a number of families from India and Afghanistan. They helped them with housing, clothing, furniture and even helped them to find work in the city.

Energy Support Scheme - Over the winter months the combined Conferences of St John the Baptist/St Mary Magdalene, Perth have been operating a scheme to help vulnerable families cope with the steep rises in the price of gas/electricity.

Galloway Diocese

Our Lady of Mount Carmel conference in Kilmarnock hosted two very successful festive afternoon tea events. Attendees enjoyed a selection of sandwiches, scones and cakes with tea and coffee before taking part in a Christmas themed quiz.

Christmas parcels were prepared for delivery to two local primary schools and early years centre. 81 families received a box of biscuits, a selection box for each child and a gift card for groceries.

Callers collecting food parcels were offered a selection of warm clothing with snoodies, fleece blankets, socks, hats, scarves and gloves all greatly received. In addition, several were referred to Citrus Energy and received vouchers to top up their energy.

Glasgow Archdiocese

The Lincoln Community Kitchen (LCK) operating on a Wednesday evening in Knightswood continued to develop, feeding and providing toiletries for approximately 80 – 100 people, mostly but not exclusively for families with refugee / asylum status or individual males with additional issues. To cope with the additional and high volume of demand for other assistance for items such as clothing, shoes, bedding household goods etc a referral system was put in place in partnership with the local resident's association and Turning Point Scotland. This worked well and enabled a targeted approach to be taken to ensure those most in need were helped.

An anonymous benefactor offered over 500 T shirts and a large number of hats, snoods, baby clothes and other items of clothing which were distributed to the LCK, the Ozanam Centre in Glasgow city centre and conferences in the city.

The Frederic Ozanam Student Scholarship Fund provided individual grants of £1500 for with 8 young people from disadvantaged homes who might not otherwise go to University.

Motherwell Diocese

The Motherwell Furniture Project has continued to thrive. The generosity of the public is a great attribution to the work of the project. In this reporting period 110 households received a range of furnishings which enabled families to provide a better home. 80 Uplifts including complete house clearances were also carried out.

The Diocese is very active and supportive of youth involvement through the ‘Mini Vinnies.

Paisley Diocese

Our Lady of the Wayside, Paisley has continued operating a Soup Kitchen on a Friday evening, collecting & distributing basic food and toiletry provisions for parish clients.

St Vincent’s Hospice continues to be supported.

St Andrews & Edinburgh Archdiocese

A particular success across the Archdiocese was the number of Conferences that set up and supported “warm room” initiatives. The Furniture Project continued to support the Diocesan needs and reached out to welcome refugee families from Ukraine, Syria, Afghanistan, Angola, and a number of other countries.

The SSVP’s furniture project continued to provide furniture and white goods for tenants, who are struggling financially, across the whole of West Fife and at no cost.

Time was also spent strengthening the structure within the St Andrews & Edinburgh SSVP to understand the issues, challenges Conferences are facing.

Breakdown of support 1st April 2023- 31st March 2024								
Diocese	Home Visits	Hospital Visits	Families Assisted Financially	Families Assisted - Furniture etc.	No. of People Transported to Mass	Number of Outings / Socials	Number of attendees at Outings/ Socials	Total Number of Activities
Aberdeen	638	56	63	8	212	1	6	984
St Andrew’s & Edinburgh	6730	476	1284	1021	1217	144	3641	14513
Argyll & Isles	15	2	48	1	0	2	70	138
Dunkeld	1213	85	386	87	678	12	218	2679
Galloway	1903	215	852	46	545	15	254	3830
Glasgow	4133	680	1710	110	2348	41	1453	10475
Motherwell	5972	1028	1451	342	4983	39	1036	14851
Paisley	3089	225	1205	99	2011	35	1008	7672
Total	23693	2767	6999	1714	11994	289	7686	55142

SUPPORT OUTWITH SCOTLAND

SSVP Twinning programme

Overseas aid was strengthened in 2023/24 with quarterly Conference contributions being increased from £30 to £40. General Twinning supported 260 Conferences in India and 100 in South Africa. Additionally, £9,655 was raised to support students and £4,170 was raised to support projects in India.

SSVP Commission for International Aid and Development (CIAD)

The SSVP Council General International Commission for International Aid and Development (CGI CIAD), and Fund for International Solidarity (FIS), considered how best to assist SSVP members supporting the many disasters and emergencies around the world. SSVP members in Scotland have a long and established commitment to international aid. During 2023/24 an area of particular concern was the Middle East. During 2023/24 £40,268 was raised to support the International Solidarity Fund, with the majority being allocated to the Middle East.

COLLABORATION

The Society in Scotland is part of a wider family known as the Family of Vincentians of FamVin for short.

FamVin GB is a coming together of various Vincentian organisations committed to tackling poverty in the UK and beyond. The organisations include the AIC (Association of International Charities), De Paul International, SVP England and Wales, Daughters of Charity and NOAH.

Noah is involved in helping migrants (mainly from beyond EU) settled in the UK and then getting their benefits sorted. The AIC works with the homeless, the elderly and prisoners in various ways to make the lives of those people better. De Paul International sits on a United Nations working group that ensures homelessness remains a world issue for the UN to address. The SVP in England and Wales run various community centres and clubs throughout their countries in addition to the basic SVP activity of visitation to homes and hospitals. They are encouraging local conferences to make regular contact with local MP's as a way of improving social conditions for the people they serve in their area.

SSVP Scotland is active with The Daughters of Charity. We continue to support the Louise Project in Govanhill, Glasgow which works with mostly the Roma community. We also support 'The Listening Heart' at Parkhead Cross in Glasgow. This project is there for those with a need of company or privacy to come in and enjoy a cup of tea and chat.

SSVP Scotland is also member of the Poverty Alliance & Fair Trade Forum and attends their annual meetings and contributes on topics that relate to Social Justice.

EVENTS IN 2023 - 2024

The International General Council Presidential Election Meeting 12 -18 June 2023

Joe Maguire ,Vice President attended The International General Council Presidential Election Meeting 12 -18 June 2023 at the Casa Tra Noi Hotel in Rome. The election itself was held on Tuesday 13 June and there were three candidates; Maria del Carmen Guzman Soto, Eduardo Marques Almeida and Juan Manuel Burgos Gomez.

The election process began earlier in the year when national councils were presented with a video c.v. from each candidate. Each council voted for its chosen candidate and returned their choice at the international meeting. Scotland chose Eduardo Marques Almeida who received 48 votes in total but Juan Manuel Burigos Gomez won with 68 votes. He took up office in September 2023. His office will run for six years.

SSVP Scotland Annual Meeting, 26th August 2023 Conference Hotel , Clydebank

It was attended by over 140 members and had as its theme “Adaptability in a changing world”. The final workshop

175th Anniversary Glasgow Civic Reception, 12th October 2023

In recognition of the work and contribution that the SSVP has made to the city, Glasgow City Council hosted a civic reception for SSVP members, their volunteers and guests.

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