

PARISH PARTNERSHIP

Wivelsfield's link with St Matthew's Aberdeen, Sierra Leone **BETTER TOGETHER**

NEWSLETTER 62

AUGUST 2020

IT'S BEEN A WHILE!

Our last Newsletter was way back in January of this year. Since then a number of situations have changed and the future nature of our link is under review. More of that at a later date. Suffice it to say that if you make contributions to the link and we haven't been in touch with you individually, please do not make any further contributions for the foreseeable future. At the moment we have more than enough funds to fulfil all existing commitments for some time.

SAD NEWS.

Earlier in the year our "main man" in Aberdeen, Charles Clarkson-Williams, passed away as a result of pancreatic cancer. He was in his 80's and had been in deteriorating health for some time. He had been our chief link and main source of information right from the start of the link and his passing is a considerable blow.

He was the treasurer of St. Matthew's church, a leading force in getting their new church hall built (more on this below) as well as sustaining the link with the local mosque and the scholarships that we have provided to enable Christian and Muslim children to have a secondary education.

As a young man he was the recipient of a Commonwealth scholarship to study printing in New Zealand and subsequently in Britain before returning to his native Sierra Leone to be a major part of the government printing operation.

A devout Christian who married a Muslim, he was a prime mover in setting up the link with the mosque and introducing the scholarship scheme.

PROPOSED VISIT.

This September is the 200th anniversary of the founding of St. Matthew's church and it had been our intention to send out a small party (including our vicar) to help them in their celebrations. Under present circumstances this, sadly, will not be possible.



COMPLETED PROJECTS.

Church hall. When we initiated our link St. Matthew's didn't have a church hall and we undertook to help. Items we have financed over the years have included the ground floor pillars which now support a first and second floor, grills to cover the ground floor windows, sanitary plumbing and electrical installations.

The hall now has a management committee which uses revenue from the hire of the hall to go towards the development of the flats which are envisaged for the upper floors and our involvement is now complete.

Vikki Luke. Vikki is a maternity nurse who provided accommodation for us on our first visit over 10 years ago and several subsequent visits. From time to time over the years we have given her financial support to buy maternity supplies for her hospital. We have also sent parcels of clothing and medical supplies and taken out similar supplies in suitcases on our various visits.

The Maternity Hospital in which she works is now supported by UNFPA who have a wide range of programmes to help families in countries such as Sierra Leone which have very rudimentary health systems. Such help as we have been able to give has been superceded by the new arrangements.

UNFPA is (or was) the United Nations Fund for Population Activities but now exists under the shorter title of United Nations Population Fund. They supply Vikki's hospital with maternity packs and clothes for newborn babies. They have also created a Covid19 isolation unit and PPE for staff.

Sierra Leone has a population of just over 7 million. So far there have been 1,937 confirmed cases of Covid19 with 69 deaths,



Vikki in her PPE at work

SCHOLARSHIPS.

We currently support 12 children and we have sufficient funds to make sure that they can complete their remaining years. We are waiting to get details of how our sponsored children are progressing so that we can give you details when we next contact you.

**Paul Welch
14/08/2020**