



St Vincent  
de Paul Society

England and Wales

Turning Concern into Action

# COMMUNITY & PARTICIPATION





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*As humans we were not created to live alone, but in community. We should therefore pursue the common good for a community. Every member of society has a duty to develop this common good and every member has a right to enjoy the benefits brought about by it.*

## The SVP response

The SVP has from the very beginning believed that befriending and accompaniment are the way to help people. When we walk alongside we begin to understand the complex nature of poverty and its effects. For many who are supported have found 'a sense of belonging', which has led in turn to them supporting others in need through becoming members or volunteering.

## Founder's Thought

I beg you not to think of the distance between us. Rather, think of us as strongly united, incapable of ever being separated, because separation is impossible in the close union created by holy charity.  
-St Louise de Marillac -



### 1 Corinthians 12:26-27

If one part suffers, every part suffers with it. If one part is honoured, every part shares in its joy. You are the body of Christ. Each one of you is a part of it.



## Case Study: Working together to make a change

When Darren's relationship broke down, he found himself homeless, jobless, and sleeping on the streets. But when he heard from other homeless people about the local SVP community centre, his life began to turn around. "Meeting and speaking to other homeless people in a safe place was great. I loved the feeling of comradery between everyone."

It was there he met Emma, who was also homeless after leaving an abusive relationship. The SVP team supported both Emma and Darren in getting off the streets and moving into permanent accommodation. Now they live in their own flat and volunteer for the SVP together. "Being part of this SVP community has helped me a lot and I now have my life back."



We are all one family in the world. Building a community that empowers everyone to attain their full potential through each of us respecting each other's dignity, rights and responsibilities makes the world a better place to live.  
Pope John Paul II

## Question Point

- In what ways do you think charity work fosters belonging?
- Can you give an example of when have you felt like you had a role to play and how it felt to be needed?
- Is there an example you can think of in the life of Jesus where he helps someone to belong?



# COMMUNITY & PARTICIPATION NOTES

## DEFINE COMMUNITY & PARTICIPATION:

As humans we were not created to live alone, but in community. We should therefore pursue the common good for a community. Every member of society has a duty to develop this common good and every member has a right to enjoy the benefits brought about by it.

## THE SVP RESPONSE:

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## CASE STUDY: Working together to make a change

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## BIT OF BIBLE:



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## QUOTE:

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## CONCLUSION:

At the heart of everything the SVP does is 'solidarity' and 'dignity'. Creating community where people support each other is the principal way the SVP offers support to those in need. Not simply by providing items that benefactors may need, but by getting to know them, and supporting them like family, and not just service users

We see with Darren and Emma, they both sought a helping hand and in turn found a whole community of support, a job and a long lasting relationship and their very own family.

