

THE
Sylvia Wright
TRUST

Reg. Charity No.326139

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Dear Supporters

Sylvia often says to her supporters, "Without you I can do nothing".

I am delighted therefore to send you our very first DVD showing what your support has so far achieved. It shows Sylvia responding to the exhortation – "Do all the good you can, however and wherever you can, for as many people as you can, for as long as you can."

The DVD has been produced free of cost to the Trust; we are grateful to a supporter in India who did most of the filming and to the students and staff at Leeds Trinity University College who edited the film and provided the commentary. Two supporters have funded the copying.

While we have not tried to compete with BBC documentary standards, I know that the DVD will give you a clear and accurate impression of Sylvia's projects in Thiruvannamalai. Her achievements are amazing and are a credit to her faith, determination and relentless hard work as well as to your loyal support over the last 29 years.

Despite some current perceptions of India as an 'emerging' economy, recent UN research demonstrates that 8 Indian states have more poor people (421 million) than in the 28 poorest countries of Africa combined. There are still real, desperate needs in the community Sylvia serves and these are being met honestly, without corruption and in a good spirit. Many thousands of poor, sick and disabled people continue to rely on her; hundreds of profoundly deaf children are being given a lifeline.

At the same time, we recognise that India is changing and developing. Support from the Indian community is increasing and the Indian Government is slowly improving health care and education for its 1.2 billion people. Nobody knows how many years it will be before this provision takes full effect. Sylvia thinks that her school for deaf children, the two day centres for severely disabled children and the Nursing College will be needed for the foreseeable future. In the hospital, some beneficial government partnerships may develop sooner. If they do, I am sure we will all be delighted to look back on a huge success in bridging the medical gap in an honest and caring way. Sylvia has been building this bridge for 29 years and we are almost at the other side.

Almost. In the meantime, Sylvia soldiers on and we try to keep up with her.

Sylvia is always looking to improve the quality of health care further, hence the new Nursing College which has been her long-standing ambition and dream. You will see from the Trust accounts that our major financial commitment last year was to send most of the £190,000 required to build the college, with the balance being due in the current year. The college is tremendous value for money. In two years time, it will be self-financing and will produce a regular supply of nurses who will have both formal qualifications and Sylvia's magic ingredient of real, committed, patient care. This will be a wonderful legacy for the future, a jewel in the crown.

The Trustees did however agonise long and hard over the consequent reduction in our financial reserves. We need these reserves to ensure that we can, without fail, send the monthly grant on which Sylvia depends for her day to day commitments. In the end we backed Sylvia's judgement and took the view that reserves, like talents, are for using rather than hoarding. In the event, some specific donations funded around one half of the building costs, leaving a balance of £95,000 to find.

Of more concern is the ongoing battle to raise the grant of £15,500 which we send each month.

With your help and the efforts of a small but very active band of volunteers, our regular income in the UK has in fact increased but has still not kept pace with our regular outgoings to India.

Child sponsorship, talks, school projects, events, Christmas Cards, wedding, anniversary and funeral collections and other initiatives have all helped.

We know that one reason why supporters have been so generous and confident in their giving is that 97 pence in every pound donated goes directly to support Sylvia's work. The Trust has no paid staff and virtually no administrative expenses; the Trustees pay their own travel costs.

It would be remiss of us not to continue all of our efforts. Accordingly, even in these difficult times, could I ask if any supporters feel they could possibly offer further help, perhaps by reviewing their regular giving or by making 'one off' donations towards the cost of the Nursing College?

At the same time, supporters can also help enormously by spreading the word in their own communities. Our website (www.sylviawright.org) is a very useful and up to date resource. Brochures and other hand-outs are also available on request.

Do please tell friends and family about Sylvia's work and show or lend them the 20 minute DVD. Please let me know if you would like extra copies and please don't miss any opportunity to recruit a new supporter or sponsor or to suggest a venue for one of our volunteer speakers who will be pleased to tell a wider audience the Sylvia Wright Story.

I do hope you enjoy the DVD and feel rightly proud of what you have helped to achieve.

With kind regards and every good wish for Christmas and for the coming year,

Tony Allinson (Chairman)