

## **Lee Oasis (Registered Charity 1128260) 2009/2010 Report**

This has been Lee Oasis's first full year as a registered charity. We delivered to more households than last year, taking referrals from more agencies than previously. We were also successful at forging new community links which helped to promote our profile as a charity and also raise much needed funds.

At the end of last year we identified a need for more volunteers to help us to continue and expand the work of Lee Oasis. We particularly needed new van team members and helpers at the Drop In and baby equipment checkers. The Drop In now has a healthy number of volunteers and the project is running very smoothly. We have had some new members of the van team but we still require more due to the increased demand for our services. We also now have a fundraiser who has identified grant providers and put in applications on behalf of Lee Oasis.

We have had another very busy year, delivering to 215 households in total. Our van teams have been working very hard and there are now van runs between 3-4 times a week. Many items of large household furniture and baby equipment were collected and recycled last year. Our Drop-In continued to be popular and provided accessibility to many smaller items such as crockery, cutlery, pots and pans, curtains and bedding. A healthy flow of donations made it possible to build up a stock for fundraising events. Many of our deliveries have gone to homes which have children and have been referred to us by those working with families. We take referrals from agencies working with families and also individuals with diverse problems such as drug or alcohol dependency or disabilities. We are targeting low income and means tested households through referrals from statutory care agencies and larger charities including, Family support Officers, Health Visitors, Hostel Officers, Mental Health teams and other social workers.

We have been continuing our program of PAT testing. The testing of smaller appliances such as toasters, kettles and irons has been very successful. This has meant we have recycled many items and kept them out of landfill sites.

The issue of reliable independent funding is critical to the long-term survival of Lee Oasis. The founder congregations are generous and pay a substantial portion towards the annual cost of keeping the van on the road and the Drop In open but we depend on grant aid from independent sources. Two key grants run out next year: the Church Urban Fund which has paid for our phone line, PAT testing and volunteer expenses for two years and the Grassroots fund which pays for our additional garage. New funders must be found to cover basic running expenses but also to fund new projects that we have identified a strong need for.

This year we have been building strong links with our local community. Bonus Pastor College have continued to support us, they raised money to buy stair gates, cot mattresses and high chairs. We have attracted corporate sponsorship and some publicity from Waitrose in Grove Park and Sainsbury's Lee Green. We were picked as Sainsbury's local charity of the year which raised £1,000. We also set up a fundraising stand and display leading to local support and increased awareness. Christmas gift boxes were collected by staff and customers and handed to the Family Support Unit in Catford and distributed to disadvantaged children. Unsold perishable food was delivered by staff and volunteers to the homeless hostel on Burnt Ash Hill, where hostel staff worked tirelessly to deliver it to approximately 500 people in need across the borough.

The year has been about consolidating progress already made and identifying needs of future developments. Our most pressing concern is to obtain funding for a white goods project, as there is a very large need which is currently not being met. We also need to maintain provision for purchasing safety equipment for babies and young children. PAT testing of larger items such as cookers and fridges is a problem that remains to be solved. We still need new volunteers, especially van team. We urgently need to find a Furniture Manager/Deputy to help run the furniture project. We are pleased about plans for the Drop In team to hold local fund raising events to help supplement our grant funding. We know that in these hard times, demand for our services is likely to increase but we look forward to the next year with optimism, knowing that with full support we can meet our aims.