

THE EAST SHEEN-CHENGANNUR TRUST

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LAUNCH OF WEB SITE

Thanks to the generosity of Rob Dubery of www.websites-for-small-businesses.co.uk we now have a fully operational web site of our own www.east-sheen-chengannur-trust.org.uk which can be used by our current supporters and will hopefully interest other people from across the world! If you don't use or don't know anything about the internet there is no need to worry it will not change the way we currently work with you although where our supporters are familiar with email etc we would like to make full use of this – (please take a minute to complete and return the questionnaire at the end of this newsletter). Rob not only offered all his services free but paid the registration fee for our domain (web site) name. Our warmest thanks go to him for this and if anyone wants to set up their own web site he will be happy to help for a very reasonable fee (sorry he cannot help everyone for nothing!) Sheila Brown, one of our long time supporters has already made use of the site to gather information for a talk to her local Womens Institute.

SUPPORTERS VISIT CHENGANNUR

Mireille & Geoff Stanton recently spent a few days with our project manager Jacob and his wife Deepa and have given us the following report which we reproduce in full as I'm sure all our supporters and would-be supporters would like to see a truly independent report of the good that your generosity does. Thanks Mireille for taking the time to get involved with our work. Since her return to England she has already raised around £1000 for a house. Her son, Matthew and his fiancée Liz are also involved and have asked their friends and family to give them donations towards a house for Rahul Nath (see below) rather than wedding presents for themselves – now that is what you can call unselfishness!

“We have just returned from India where we had the best of times. We visited Jacob and Deepa and were made very welcome and staying with the family was fun. We saw the good the Trust is doing and we are overwhelmed. Please tell all the lovely people who support the Trust that their money really makes a difference.



House No 30 under construction last year

We visited the home of a Sunil, a little boy who is sponsored by the Trust. He lives at the edge of the quarry where his mother breaks stones for 50 p a day in a house with three walls missing. Their very poor shack was washed away in the monsoon and now they have only one palm roof for shelter. Their very few possessions are arranged on one shelf just below the roof against the one palm frond wall. Sunil's father has lost a leg and cannot work. The sponsorship money is a vital part of their income and enables Sunil to continue at school where he is, admittedly, no great scholar!

We saw Manu, (The Trusts first Scholarship recipient) a serious young man with Harry Potter glasses at the boarding school which he attends thanks to the generosity of the Sheen Mount school children. His prospects as a child from a scheduled caste are much improved by the excellent education he is receiving.

We met Ardra, a sponsored child with the most winning smile, at her school . She sat with her 61 classmates in tightly packed rows in the suffocating heat, working from text books written in English. Her teacher said that she is a clever, hard working girl who stands 2nd in her class. We took her home and met her mother and brother. Their house is minute but impeccably kept. It is a converted cowshed on the back of her brother's house. The father had managed to scrape together the money to go and seek work in the Gulf to raise his family out of poverty. Sadly he died of a heart attack shortly after getting there. The mother earns £20 a month teaching Hindi but uses the Trust money only to pay for her children to go to a good school. The government school is very poor. I saw from the bank books which Jacob keeps meticulously for the Trust's clients that she even manages to save some of the money against bad times.

We were privileged to be present at a ceremony in which we handed over the 30th house that the Trust has built. It was very moving. The family of 4 were awfully proud and all the neighbours turned up and wanted their pictures taken! A few yards away from the lovely new house was the tiny, tumbled down palm covered lean-to resting against somebody's back wall. It was the family's previous home. I would not have registered that it could be someone's home: I would have hesitated to put a bicycle under it. Now they have a tiny, smart two roomed house with, great thing! a latrine outside. It is very basic but a god-send for the family. The father did much of the labouring work himself. They ask to thank everyone involved in making this dream possible.

We also visited the family of a man whose child Jacob has suggested to you for sponsorship. I cannot remember the family's name but the circumstances are truly awful. They live in a sordid little shack right by the side of the road. The father has had a stroke and cannot help himself at all. They were intending to build themselves a house and had got as far as the foundations when illness struck. They have 2 little children. I hope you can find them a sponsor soon. My son is getting married and asking people to make donations to charity instead of presents. We would like to think that we could find enough money to build them a house which Jacob says is an urgent need. *(this is a photo of Rahul Nath and his parents outside of their current 'house')*



People often worry that their money fails to get to the people who really need it. This is not the case here. Jacob keeps tight control over the affairs of the Trust. He can be tough when needed and he is careful to give people responsibility for their lives. He lets people pick their own contractors so they have "ownership" of the scheme and also won't blame him for the results but he pays the contractor himself so the money cannot go astray. The clients must produce title for their land so that disputes won't arise. The deeds of the houses remain with the Trust for 5 years after completion to avoid any fraudulent trading.

I am convinced that the money we send makes a vital difference to the lives of the people we help and that Jacob makes responsible use of it. Some of the other sponsors might find this reassuring.

What a lot I have learnt! Thank you , kind people for doing this. You are truly angels."

The work of the Trust is continuing to expand and thanks to our supporters we are planning ever more aid to the needy but obviously this does involve more time and administrative expense. In order to minimise the cost and expense of producing and posting our newsletters we would like our supporters, where possible, to view them on our web site or receive them by email and we would be grateful if you could spend a couple of minutes completing the questions below before returning to either address above or alternatively e-mail the information to russellmattin@btinternet.com

NAMEADDRESS.....

POST CODEEMAIL ADDRESS(if any).....

TEL NO

Please cross through those that DON'T apply:

1. Yes, I will be happy to view future newsletters on the web site if you tell me when they are available*
- 2 Please send newsletters by email
3. Please continue to send me newsletters by post
4. Please remove me from your mailing list (not applicable to current sponsors)

Your reply would be much appreciated !

**Please check you can view these first as you may need updated software etc*