

Fundraising News.

Welcome to Southend in Sight's winter edition of Fundraising News.

With our utility bills having doubled over the last year, we are conscious of how much it will cost to keep our building running and how we are going to maintain our services at the current level. To this end, we have continued applying for and have been successful with grants from national and local trust funders.

The Garfield Weston Foundation has once again supported our ongoing work with a £10K grant and we are waiting to hear from other funders – fingers crossed!

Our community fundraising continues apace, with support from local church, St Mary the Virgin in North Shoebury. They managed to raise £400 for us through a Flower Festival and music concert.

The team has also been out in the community giving talks to local groups such as the MNO Ladies Club, pictured below at their weekly meeting in Eastwood Baptist Church.



You will notice with this issue that we have once again enclosed a letter asking for a monetary donation this Christmas. We only ask you to give you are able, as we know this will be a tough winter for many people.

We are currently preparing for our annual Christmas pop-up shop, which takes place in our Centre on Saturday 3 December from 9:30am to 4pm. This established event is a highlight in the calendar of those in the know. Last year we had a queue of customers waiting to pay by 9.45am! Our advice is to arrive early so as not to miss out on purchasing that all important Christmas bargain.

This year we will have even more of our now famous treat baskets, as well as the usual one-off decorations, Christmas jumpers, trees, lights and toys. The picture below shows Head Elf Lois with volunteers Christine and Viv, getting into the Christmas spirit, modelling a few of our Christmas outfits.



Our charity shop continues on an upward trajectory. Thanks to our loyal repeat customer, the cheeriness of our volunteers and local people spreading the word about “the best charity shop on Hamlet Court Road”, we continue to do well.

To reach these high figures, we rely on the dedication of our volunteers, led by Shop Manager Lois. Our thanks to the fabulous shop team for all their hard work front of house and behind the scenes sorting, steaming, selling online, cleaning and PAT testing everything.

Don't forget if you can spare £5 a month, you could join our Diamond Club and help support our work. For more information on this and any other fundraising enquiries, please call **Catherine Hodgson** on **01702 34 21 31**.