



What do SVP's central staff teams/functions do?

The different staff teams and functions are here to support all the amazing work that happens in communities across England and Wales. Think of them like the people behind the scenes—helping everything run smoothly so that SVP members and volunteers can focus on helping others.

- The **Membership** team provides resource to guide and grow members' engagement and ensures their voices shape the SVP's direction and responds to their needs.
- The **Young Vincentian** programme empowers the future generations of SVP members with opportunities and support.
- The **Social Justice** team works on campaigns to tackle the big issues that cause poverty. They speak up for people in need and try to change unfair systems, so everyone has a better chance in life.
- **Fundraising** teams secure the financial means to keep the work of the SVP going, including the Community Support Projects which were set up in response to the needs of communities.
- Our **Retail** shops generate income to sustain members' work.
- The **Communications** function helps share the amazing work that members and volunteers do. They tell stories and run campaigns to help more people learn about the SVP, get involved, and support our work.
- **Governance** provides oversight and accountability, ensuring the SVP's activities align with its mission and legal and safeguarding responsibilities.

By listening to and being led by our members, these teams make sure volunteers have what they need—like tools, funding, publicity, support, and spaces to work from—to help people in their communities.



What is the difference between a Member and a Volunteer?

- A **Member** is someone who joins a local SVP group (called a "Conference"). They work with others to spot local needs, plan and lead projects, and give direct support to people who need help.
 - Anyone can become a member – you don't need to be Catholic, but you do need to be accept our Christian values. We help all people irrespective of their background or religion.
- A **Volunteer** helps out by giving their time and skills in all sorts of ways – like working in our shops, supporting local centres, helping at children's camps, or lending a hand in an office.
 - Volunteers can be involved for a short time or longer, but unlike members, they don't usually take part in planning or leading local projects.

How do you raise funds?

- We raise funds in a variety of ways – including through direct donations, grants, legacies, our Summer Raffles, seasonal appeals, and from matched funding from donors.

Are funds raised by the Christmas /Lent Appeal directed to frontline services?

- The money raised during our Christmas and Lent Appeals can be used wherever it's most needed to help the SVP's work. This could mean helping people directly (frontline support) or strengthening the charity in other ways, like training volunteers or keeping our centres running. This kind of funding is called "unrestricted" because it gives us the flexibility to respond to the most urgent needs.
- We always share real stories from our work to show how these donations make a difference. Everything we do follows fundraising rules that make sure we're open and honest with the public.
- Sometimes we run special appeals for things like natural disasters or specific emergencies. These funds are "restricted", which means they're only used for the exact cause we asked for help with – and we make that really clear in our materials.



Why are you called the St Vincent De Paul society?

The Society of St Vincent de Paul is named after St Vincent de Paul, a Catholic priest who lived in the 1600s. He is famous for his dedication to helping poor and vulnerable people. Inspired by his example of kindness, charity, and practical help, our society was founded to continue that mission. We follow his spirit by supporting people in need, no matter who they are or where they come from.

Other common questions may be about your personal experience of the SVP like, how did you get involved? How are you involved? What sort of work do you do with the SVP? Why do you think it's important?

When you're asked questions about your personal experience with the SVP—like how you got involved, what you do, or why you think the work is important—try to be honest and speak from the heart. Share your own story and what volunteering means to you. For example, explain what first inspired you to join, what activities you take part in, and how it has affected you or the people you help. Remember, your personal experience makes the SVP's work real and relatable for others. Keep your answers clear, positive, and focused on the impact the SVP has on communities and individuals. If you don't know the answer to something, it's okay to say you'll find out and follow up later.