



## Friends of Life

National charity Life was founded in 1970 on the principle that it is not enough simply to oppose abortion but that positive alternatives should also be provided.

Life's mission is to create a just society which has the utmost respect for all human life from fertilisation to natural death. We believe that opposition to abortion has to go hand-in-hand with the provision of alternatives. We won't give up until those facing difficult pregnancies can choose life and abortion is a thing of the past.

Life is unique in the UK as it combines prolife advocacy and education work with nationwide services providing positive alternatives to abortion. We support anyone facing an unexpected pregnancy, pregnancy loss or after abortion. We also strive to inspire and inform the next generation to value all human life from beginning to end.

Life's services grew rapidly with 100 Life groups by 1980 caring for women facing crisis and unexpected pregnancies. In 1973, we acquired our first house in Coventry. Following the passing of the 1977 Housing (Homeless Persons) Act, dozens of local authorities saw Life groups as the answer to discharging their new statutory responsibility to house homeless pregnant women. There were soon centres and houses in almost all cities and major towns in the UK. By 2000, more than 5,000 women and their children were accommodated in our houses and the number of women and their babies that have been housed is significantly higher today.

Our Life houses help women who are pregnant and facing homelessness. We provide the practical and emotional support women need until they are ready to move on. Our houses provide a home-from-home environment with other people in similar circumstances. For each woman, our Support Worker puts together an individual support plan covering areas like budgeting, parenting, health & well-being, work & training and staying safe.

Locally, there are Life houses in Haywards Heath and Crawley. We are inviting Worth parishioners to become Friends of Life. Each house needs friendship. Friends provide practical help with everyday tasks such as gardening and basic house maintenance. Friends also help transfer basic skills to the young women, such as cooking, budgeting and child-care. None of this needs any specialist training, and is done together with the Support Worker who is responsible for all health and safety issues. The only donation we seek from Friends is their time and concern for the women and babies in our care.

As a parish, we seek to *livesimply*. The vision for the *livesimply* challenge is to make more explicit the link between faith and action. While Life is a secular charity, supporting Life fulfils many of the *livesimply* principles. Stephen Sharpe, Life's Chief Executive, is coming to Worth to tell us more about how we can help. Stephen is a deacon in our diocese and will preach at the vigil mass on Saturday 30th September and will give a short message at the end of mass on Sunday 1 October. We will have a stand in the narthex and Support Workers from our local houses will be there and happy to tell you about our work.

Do pick up a flyer telling you about Friends of Life, and go to the parish web site for links to the charity's resources.

Contact Priscilla and Robin Williamson on 01444 811519 if you would like to know more.



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