

Bulgarian Orphanage News

BASIC NECESSITIES APPEAL 2009

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Tackling the most urgent of the needs
during our visit □ Elhovo October 2009

Christmas

2009



**BASIC
NECESSITIES**

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Basic Necessities -
Bringing a smile

**Some estimated
basic Costs per
Orphanage per
month**

Nappies (45 children)
£810
Baby Wipes
£75
Formula for 45 babies
£550
Soap
£16.50



Ooh new Shoes!

At this time, only 14 children are in full time care but around 150 children come in every Monday and go back to the villages at the weekend. We arrived to find the water pipes broken and, with no money to pay the water bill, the supply had been turned off indefinitely. This meant that the children faced a walk of 2.5 miles each day to the local stream. As water is such a fundamental human need, we agreed to pay to have the pipe fixed a cost of around £50, paid the outstanding water bill of £150 and also put another £150 into the water account which we hope will cover the charges until our next visit.

Again we found that the children's diet was very poor with watery soup and bread served both for lunch and dinner. So, once again a trip to the local market was required so that we could stock up on staples such as potatoes, onions, fresh fruit, dried beans etc to supplement them over the worst of the winter months. We also arranged with a local butcher to supply meat, enough to make a stew once a week—an event that both the staff and children are very much excited by! Can you even imagine it - the thought of getting excited by one simple dinner!?

The total costing of the food bill was just £400 not bad considering that this will go a long way in their attempts to feed 14 children over the next 5 months. I doubt that we could do this in our local shops! This allows them to have at least one hot meal a week from now until March when the vegetable plot should provide them with fresh vegetables.

The children had no winter trainers so we had a day trip to the shops to buy each of them a pair. What fun that was, watching them fight over the colours and styles whether the trainers fitted or not!!! The total cost of the trainers was a mere £175. I know that this would hardly pay for one or two pairs of shoes/trainers for our children. The children were delighted to see us and when they heard that another container would arrive soon, both the director and children were overjoyed.



They all send their love and thanks.

Where are they Now?

Quite a few of the older children have now been moved to different homes. Fortunately however, we were able to get in contact with quite a few of them and both Richard and I had the pleasure of spending some time with a couple of the children who had previously resided in Elhovo.

Elena has been moved approximately 100km away and she is now helping out in a small baby orphanage. I am happy to report that she is enjoying her time there. Elena is a delightful child who has endured a lot in her short life. I am really pleased to see that she is doing so well in her new surroundings and I have promised that I shall pay her a visit every time I visit Bulgaria.



Six of the older boys have been transferred to a training school where they will get the opportunity to learn a trade. We are absolutely delighted for them and wish them well in their endeavours. The appeal donated some money to the various schools during the summer to help them provide some new tools for the boys. I will continue to keep in contact with them and will keep you updated with their progress. Unfortunately the training college is approximately 600 km from Elhovo and was too far to travel to during our short visit. We do however hope to catch up with the boys during the summer months.

Meanwhile, back in Yambol the babies just keep coming. At the last count we had 185 children aged 0-5 years and speaking to the director, she tells me that with the onset of winter many more children will be handed in. She needs, as always, clothes, footwear, nappies and blankets. On my visit the children seemed happy and the staff do the best they can and really appreciate the help that they receive. They send their thanks and best wishes.



We currently have a container packed full of even more basic necessities. It is waiting and ready to go but we need to raise the £2,500 needed to pay for the shipment. It would be fabulous if we were in a position to send this to Bulgaria early next year. Just remember every penny helps!

Fundraising event

**Bag packing at Sainsbury Forestside
Saturday 7 November 2009**

Come and lend your support when my self and a group of willing volunteers will be taking place in a bag pack. So, come and throw a few pennies (or pounds), into one of our buckets to help our efforts, or alternatively, if you feel like donating a few hours of your time then come join us at the bag packing event (we have at least 20 tills to cover and we will be there all day!)

Just give me a ring on my mobile as soon as possible and let me know what time you would like to help out and how many hours you are willing to donate.

Loving Hands

Yet again a special thanks must go to the Loving Hands knitting group whose members from throughout the U.K continue to post boxes of items to me – even during the postal strike the clothing donations arrive in bulk at my door!

Primark continues to amaze us with their generosity and many a day and night has been spent sifting through the clothes provided and packing them up so that they can be allocated to the areas where the need is greatest. While are clothing needs are pretty much covered (thank you Primark!), we continue to need the very basic items – Nappies, soap, sanitary towels, baby bottles and blankets.

Primark does us proud

**Tara Baird, Mr Harding
& the girls of Glenlola Collegiate School □ Bangor**

We introduced you to intrepid reporter and volunteer Tara Baird last year. Tara joined us in Bulgaria and spent several days visiting the children in the various orphanages. Since her visit, Tara has continued with her fundraising efforts and has actively encouraged her family, friends and school colleagues to get involved with the appeal.

The latest efforts ably assisted by Mr. Harding and the girls of Glenlola Collegiate raised a massive £410! What a massive achievement. This money helped us tackle the most urgent needs during our recent visit.

Tara's mum Rosemary continues to provide us with support and regularly hosts dinner parties and coffee mornings for friends, using the events as an opportunity to raise some much needed funds for the appeal. Thanks Rosemary—you are a star!



Ginni's Medical Needs

Following a long and painful struggle, Ginni (the teenage boy that suffers from crippling back problems), has been moved to a home specifically for children with similar disabilities.

His new home has a hospital attached and so I am delighted to say that he is finally one step closer to getting the pain relief that he so desperately needs.

Unfortunately however, the treatment that he needs will cost £1,000 per year and so at present his treatment is reviewed on a monthly basis and very much dependent upon whether or not the home has any finances available to cover the medical costs.

With your help, I would love to be in a position to help cover half of his hospital costs for the coming year.



A big big thanks to one and all.

It makes my heart sing to see all the changes over the last few years and I feel truly honoured that we have helped to bring improvements on such a wide scale. The children seem much happier in comparison to when we first met them and they have a few toys to play with, clean clothes to wear (with the promise of more). The staff now know that we will continue to do our best to keep the items coming and so they no longer hoard them and keep them back for a rainy day.

Absolutely none of this would be possible without the help and support provided by individuals and companies.

I know that due to the recent financial climate we have all found it difficult and money continues to be tight. However, we still very much need your help. As we all prepare for Christmas and start thinking about buying presents for family and friends, we would ask that you pause for a few minutes and think about those that even in these difficult times, continue to be much worse off than we could even begin to imagine.

On behalf of the children, staff and villagers that you have helped us support over the last couple of years, we would like to wish you all a very

Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year

Thank you so much for your continued support - let's keep up the good work in 2010.