

THE HAMBY FOUNDATION

Registered charity no; 1106407

www.hambys.org.uk

Supporting Romanian children, old people and families in need

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Hello – I hope you and those you love are well.

It is now many months since I last sent you a newsletter. This summer we went out to Constanta in Romania and I met up with all the groups we support. Things are still very tough there. Severe inflation coupled with a drop in Government aid and pensions, alongside a fall in aid from other charities has made our contributions even more vital.

PRR, the children's charity we work alongside has rescued more children off the streets, some as young as four years old. We spent time with the kids, hearing their stories. Now they are safe, secure and loved. I was very moved, but happy to see these children off the streets. They are very vulnerable to gangs that will exploit them to steal - or worse – and it is a delight to see them cleaned up, being fed and clothed and attending school. The workers in both the girls home and boys home do a fantastic job caring for these children. We still go out to feed children living rough on the streets in filthy conditions. This work is extremely difficult and often dangerous.

At Heart to Heart we are now supporting more old people each day, and the feeding programme is growing as the needs increase. More and more old folk now have little or no pension

and are quite simply starving. We now feed over fifty needy people each day who have no other source of help but us.

One old man, Marin is a lovely gentle man who we know well as he comes to the Heart to Heart feeding centre. He was found in the street with some bags and a cooker. He had been thrown out of his home as the landlord had found someone else who could pay more for his one tiny room. He was crying, alone and did not know where to go or what to do. It is people like this who fall through the cracks that we can help, and he is now in a temporary home until we can help support him in a little flat.

Some of you may have heard a recent Radio 4 broadcast from Bucharest, as Romania has now been a member of the EEC for four years. Since then only 4% of the promised aid has got through, although many of these problems are due to the crippling Romanian bureaucracy and corruption. The BBC interviewed people that said they couldn't send their children to school as they had no clothes for them, and said that 'some days we eat, some days we don't'. The beauty of our little charity is that 100% of our aid – your gifts and donations – get through, and we target the most needy in the most effective way.

Those of you that have followed our charity for many years will know that we primarily aim to raise funds, either by donations or through our charity shop, and use this money to the best effect. Sending out practical aid has been a secondary help, but there are times when clothing and medical aid are best sent from the UK. We had discussed sending a lorry out this autumn, but I could get no clear vision whether it was the right use of our resources, time or money. After a troubled night I decided, sadly it was probably not cost effective, disappointing as this was.

Next morning, a Romanian man walked into our Rotherham shop. He is a lorry driver who comes to the UK every two weeks, bringing a full load for IKEA. Thinking he could help, I asked if he went back with a full load, and sadly, he said he did.

My heart sank, and anyway I was apprehensive about asking him to help us if he was just a driver and would get into trouble. But, a miracle! It turned out it is his own lorry and the load he returns with is Sheffield steel: so due to weight the lorry is only loaded a few feet deep and the rest of the space is empty! He said he was willing to help us at a low cost. We have since been in contact with him and he is keen to work with us!

What are the chances of a Romanian man, a self-employed lorry driver at that, calling into the shop on the very morning I had finally decided to give up! I really took this as a sign that God wants us to do this, so the lorry is back on for mid November!

We are aiming to send as much clothing, footwear, toiletries and foodstuff as we can. We have all made shoeboxes for children over the years; I think it would be great if we send a box for the old people too. A jar of coffee, some tinned foods, a jumper or a coat will make a big difference. Please pass on our list, printed on the reverse, to anyone who may be able to help.

Many thanks to you all that remember us with donations, both monetary gifts and items to sell in the charity shop, and a huge thank you to the shop volunteers that work long hours, tirelessly and without complaining week in and week out.

I am so proud that together we are continuing to achieve something that is simply 'good' - something truly worthwhile that will enhance, enrich and in many cases save lives.

Thank you for the trust you that continue to place in me.

And finally, as I always write at the end of every newsletter, "From those you will never meet, Thank you!"

God bless

Chris

Clothing; Any good second hand clothes are useful. Even send us your rags – we can sell them to recycle. We waste nothing!

Footwear; Any good second hand shoes, adults or childrens.

Soap, toiletries, razors, toothbrushes, toothpaste and ladies personal items

Bleach and disinfectant, candles

Bicycles; These can help a child attend a distant school or a man or woman get to work

Baby equipment, toys, nappies, etc

These will go to poor families and a home for abandoned babies

Food Any tinned goods, or dried goods like pasta or rice. Supermarket own brands are fine, but please check for long use by dates. Cereals, sweets, chocolate and biscuits are good too.

Medical equipment, wheelchairs, walkers, crutches etc

Blankets are useful for people living on the streets

The PRR orphanage has been open a long time, and when I went in summer I could see that a lot of equipment is coming to the end of its life. If anyone knows of a good second-hand washing machine, fridge or freezer we can arrange collection. They also need cutlery and kitchen equipment.

This is by no means an exhaustive list. We are dealing with people who have nothing, so anything is a huge blessing.

**WE NEED TO RECEIVE ANY ITEMS
BY THE END OF OCTOBER!**

Many thanks for your help.

