

## Chernobyl 25th Anniversary

Candlelight vigils were held in many cities across Europe to mark this special anniversary in April, with our groups holding events in Manchester, Birmingham and Stoke.

Many fund raising events were held to mark the anniversary, including:

- Mid Essex group held a Russian themed Ball which raised over £20,000!
- Sanatorium volunteers organised 'a 25 hour cycle to Chernobyl'. Many passers by took part on the static bikes outside Manchester University and helped to travel the distance of 1,700 miles and 'Corrie' star Julie Hesmondhalgh launched the event, which raised over £1,000
- Alan Wade in Darlington held a wonderful three day Flower and Music Festival which raised £6,000 to be split between Chernobyl Children Lifeline and our Humanitarian Aid programme
- Fairport Convention did a gig for our Solihull group which raised £10,000
- Lloyds TSB Business Team continued their support for us with a Ball which raised £3,000
- Our new group in Cheshire raised £850 at a ceilidh
- In recognition of the 25 years since the disaster, and of the work we are doing to support children in Belarus, Sam and Moira Lupton donated a wonderful £25,000!



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Visit our website: [www.chernobyl-children.org.uk](http://www.chernobyl-children.org.uk) Secure Donations can be made online

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## CHERNOBYL CHILDREN'S PROJECT (UK)

## ПОДДЕРЖКА ДЕТЯМ БЕЛАРУСИ

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SUMMER 2011

### RECUPERATION in Britain and Belarus

Our first group of the summer arrived in early June. Five young children in remission from cancer came with their mums to stay with our group in **Endon and Stoke**. Just a week later a similar group came to **Teesdale**.



All the other children will arrive during July. This year we have four groups who will be organising their first recuperative holiday. They will all host just for a fortnight this time, but are gathering the support of new families which will enable them to keep the children for a month next year. **Rotherham** will share with **Leeds**, who have been hosting for many years, and their children come from Gomel and villages in the region; **Wimborne** will host children from Svetlagorsk who will then move on to **Solihull**, another of our most experienced groups; and children in remission from cancer will have a holiday in **Stafford** and **East Cheshire**. Co-ordinators and host families are busy raising funds, making plans for the visit and looking forward, to their first experience of hosting Belarusian children.



We are now getting ready to send volunteers out to Belarus again for the Summer Holiday Camp. Three groups will fly out, each for around 11 days, which they will spend with children from Zhuravichi orphanage and Rechitsa boarding school. All the children have physical and learning disabilities, and they love the fun and enthusiasm of our UK volunteers!

This year we held our first ever residential preparation weekend for sanatorium volunteers at High Ash Farm, with support from owner Denis Moors. It was a great success as all the volunteers had the chance to get to know each other properly, helped along by a fun session of archery for 'teambuilding' as well as sessions to inform them more about the camp, what to bring and what to expect.

During the past year, a swimming pool has been built at Ptich Sanatorium, so we're looking forward to taking many of the children for their first swim! The water will be brilliant for the most severely disabled children.



We will be providing holidays for many young adults this summer and we are very grateful to the **Persula Foundation** and **Crook for Chernobyl Children** for making this possible.

A small group of specialist volunteers is going to spend time at Zhuravichi orphanage, and Vikov institution for adults with physical and learning disabilities. This year we hope to combine their visit with some important training sessions, as one volunteer, Jacqueline Wheble, is a very experienced special needs teacher who specialises in non verbal communication. Ann Mastin (above) is a physiotherapist who has been to the camp five times and she will also give some training to carers at Ptich.



Our April Aid Convoy consisted of four trucks and they delivered to Rogachev Families Association, the Diabetic Association in Gomel, Kalinkovichi Social Services, Teleshi Kindergarten and the Education Department in Gomel. As always all the recipients were delighted to receive the aid and we are very grateful to all those who donate it as well as the great team who sort, load and deliver it to Belarus.

## Educational Visits

In February Dr Rosemary Newton, our epilepsy consultant, visited Belarus to offer advice in the care and treatment of children and adults with epilepsy.

She visited Zhuravichi Children's Home and Vikov Home for adults with disabilities where staff were very keen to ask questions and benefit from her experience.

Rosemary also visited many families in the care of the Hospice Team and the Mayflower Respite Care Centre.



At Rodni Kut, Trevor and Barbara Whiteley from Glossop, made great friends with Nazar. They also met some of the mothers and young children who have been to stay with them in the past, and others who will be coming this summer. Trevor went back out to Belarus in late June to work with Robert Gilbert and Harold Jackson on the extension at Rodni Kut.



They also met teenagers at the Children's cancer Hospital at Barovliani, who were all delighted to hear that they would have the chance of a holiday when they finish their treatment. Most charities only invite younger children for holidays so it was a happy surprise for these teenagers going through such a hard time in hospital that they can look forward to a great holiday when they are well again, even if they will be 19 by that time.

Larissa Kuzikova is a psychologist working at Barovliani. She has taken a course in art therapy and every year she helps children having treatment to produce a book of poems and drawings. With funding from the Toy Trust we brought her to Britain in June to learn more about use of therapy and play in working with children with cancer and their families.



In April members of our local groups accompanied Linda Walker on a visit to Belarus to see some of our projects and get a fuller understanding of our work.

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One of the most moving moments of the visit was when Lindsey Gilbert, from Endon, met Tanya at Ulookavye Orphanage for children with learning disabilities. It is three years since Angela stayed with Lyndsey, but she rushed up and flung her arms around her.

Nigel and Ingrid were delighted to meet some of the young people who have been to stay in Endon as teenagers. It was lovely to see how healthy they were and how their lives are progressing.



She visited CHICS, a family support group in Liverpool, met a Sargent Social Worker at Ronald McDonald House at Alder Hey; spent a day in Royal Manchester Children's Hospital with members of the Play Therapy Team; and also visited Beechwood Cancer Care Centre to hear about the therapy methods used there. Larissa went home full of new ideas and clutching some great new aids to her work.

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## Palliative Care Team Visit

In March, with funding from the **Raisa Gorbachev Foundation**, we hosted three doctors on a visit to hospices in the north of England: Natalia from the hospice in Minsk, Irina from our palliative care team in Gomel and Elena, the doctor in charge of Gomel Baby Home. They had superb visits to Francis House in Manchester; Martin House in Yorkshire and Zoe's Place, (right) a hospice for babies in Liverpool. They also went to Christie's, Beechwood Cancer Care Centre, St Ann's Hospice and Royal Manchester Children's Hospital. The Baby Home in Gomel has recently set up a palliative care department and this was a great opportunity for Elena to see hospice care at its best.



## Our New Charity Shop!

We are now the proud owners of a charity shop in Crook, Co. Durham. The shop was established ten years ago by a local charity 'Crook for Chernobyl Children.'

They have a fantastic team of volunteers who are keen to continue working in the shop now it has been handed over to CCP(UK).

The charity used to bring children from Ukraine for recuperative holidays. Now that the trustees have all decided to retire they have given us not only the shop, but also the funds they have raised in the last few years, which will be a wonderful support for all our projects in Belarus.



## Life Changing Project at Ulookavye Orphanage

Three years ago, with funding from our Craven group, Jean Holt set up a project at this orphanage for children with mild to moderate learning disabilities. The plan was to return as many children as possible to their birth family where this was appropriate and to find suitable foster families for other children.



A social worker was employed at the school to work with children and parents and the project has been so successful that 37 children have been returned to their families, placed into foster care or adopted. It is still rare in Belarus for any child with a disability to be placed in a family.

The Education Ministry were so impressed that they decided to hold a National Seminar at the orphanage in April. Over 50 people took part, including representatives from similar orphanages throughout the country.

A mother gave her experience of having her child returned to her via a video presentation. A foster mother spoke of her experience of caring for a child with learning disabilities. Galina, the psychologist at Ulookavye, spoke about attachment and separation and loss in relation to the children she helped to prepare for placement. These were topics she learned about on the first training course Jean delivered in 2000.

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The Regional Education Department have promised to fund Vera, our social worker, to continue her work, and the Ministry are now keen to employ extra staff in a similar role in all their orphanages.

We continue to deliver training programmes in many aspects of child care and development, and these have a great impact on the lives of Belarusian children. We are very grateful to **Miller Philanthropy** for their support in making much of this training possible.

We would also like to thank the **Chalk Cliff Trust** for their support of £3,000 for our young people living at Family Home 2000 in Klimovka; **Ryklow Charitable Trust** for £700 towards our palliative care team; **Olympus KeyMed** for £5,000 to improve the lives of young people living in institutions; and everyone who contributed so generously to **the 25th Anniversary Appeal** we sent out this spring.