

# CHERNOBYL CHILDREN'S PROJECT (UK)

## ПОДДЕРЖКА ДЕТЯМ БЕЛАРУСИ

Kinder House, Fitzalan Street, Glossop, SK13 7DL

Registered Charity No. 1059832

[www.chernobyl-children.org.uk](http://www.chernobyl-children.org.uk)

Tel: 01457 863534

[www.chernobyl-children.org.uk](http://www.chernobyl-children.org.uk)

[ccprojectuuk@gmail.com](mailto:ccprojectuuk@gmail.com)

Winter Newsletter 2020

## Support the Children of Belarus this Christmas

For children having treatment in the Cancer Hospital in Minsk this year has been especially hard, with all the restrictions over visits and family contact adding to the usual anxiety and stress, and the constant fear of the virus and the impact it would have on their weakened immune systems.

We hope very much that it may be possible to invite children in remission to the UK again next summer.

But in the meantime, through our partners 'Children in Trouble' we would like to provide Christmas presents, help with parties and celebrations and other support the children might need at this time.



***£10 would buy a gift for a child spending their Christmas and New Year in the hospital.***

Or you might prefer to support our ongoing work with children and young people in Gomel Region. The work of our **Home Hospice Team** has now expanded, so that alongside staff funded by the local Health Department, they



are supporting many families outside the city of Gomel.

**Family Home 2000** at Klimovka will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at the end of this month. A

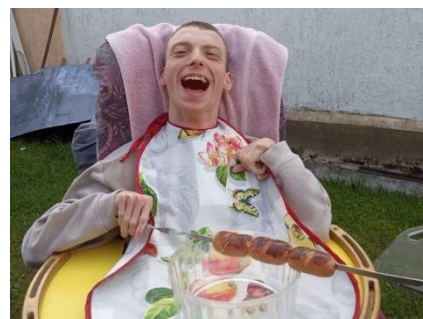
permanent home for Liena, Greesha and Ira, it has been a much needed temporary home for many young people who have developed their independence skills under the wonderful support of

our carers, Larissa, Sasha and Tanya.



**Rodni Kut** is home to four young people with both physical and learning disabilities. This is the first time in 17 years that Anya has not been able to visit her family in Devon, and the other young people have missed out on their sanatorium holiday.

They have still had a happy summer with their Papa Sergei and carers, and we would like to help them celebrate Christmas as we all look forward to a better year ahead for them and for everyone in Belarus.







## Respite Project at Rechitsa

This project, originally sponsored by one of our Trustees, Brian Hardwick, has been a great success and we hope to continue it. Olga and Maxim are young people with very mild learning disabilities and they have been providing respite care to more profoundly disabled children.

When they arrive at Vanya's flat he gets very excited. He clearly loves their visits and that they are genuinely fond of him, and proud of their achievement in looking after him. They also look after a boy with Down's Syndrome and

another with learning disabilities, sometimes in their own homes and sometimes at Dom Dominic, where they live with a small group of young people.

## Fund Raising

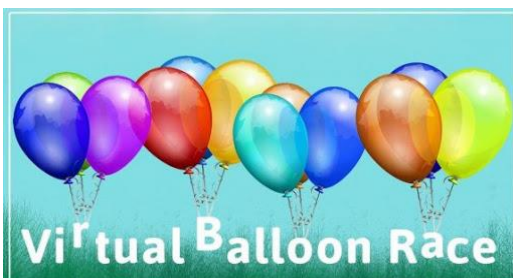
We have had some fantastic support in this difficult year from our host families, Holiday Camp Volunteers and other supporters. Eleanor and Simeon Waters, with the support of the rest of their family raised over £1,000 by walking the whole 95 miles of the Staffordshire Way. They are enthusiastic members of our Endon group and the children have all been involved with hosting Belarusian teenagers every summer of their lives till the Covid crisis made this impossible.



Julie Raftery and Matt Hansen were organising a half marathon for CCP, but it was cancelled because of Coronavirus. So they took up litter picking instead and raised an amazing £1,730 for CCP. They gathered 76 large bags of rubbish between them and were joined by other local people in their campaign in Leicestershire. 'It is good for the environment, good for the children of Belarus, keeps you fit and is quite addictive!' says Julie.

Julie also organised the 'Croft Canter' in September to support Air Ambulance and Chernobyl Children's Project. The 10 mile trail run raised a fantastic £1,972.50 for CCP. Julie usually supports activities for the Endon teenagers during the summer holiday as well as raising funds for us every year.

We have just launched a **Quiz with 100 questions** which you can do in your home, coming back to it whenever you like and sending in your answers by early January. For a minimum donation of £2 we will send you a copy of the quiz. You can find out more on the home page of our website. [www.chernobyl-children.org.uk](http://www.chernobyl-children.org.uk)



Our Balloon Race in the spring was very popular with over 400 people taking part. If you missed it, you will get another chance in January as we start the New year with another nail biting race! At just £1 a balloon or 6 for £5 it is a great way to have a bit of fun as you watch the progress of your balloon over 24 hours and raise money to support Belarusian children.



The UNICEF funded project in Gomel, led by Natasha Samoilik, Director of our partners 'Supporting Children Together', is making great progress in placing babies and young children into families.



Five children were returned to their birth families in September, seventeen were prepared for adoption and have already met their prospective new parents, and no children entered the home except for three who need palliative care. There are now just 46 babies and young children in the home and half of them are palliative. The aim is to transfer all reasonably healthy children to families and turn the home into a Palliative Care Centre.

During September training programmes were run for social workers about the recruitment,



assessment, preparation and monitoring of foster families; for inspectors from the educational departments concerning preventing babies being sent to the Baby Home; and for foster parents on the development and care needs of babies and toddlers and the importance of attachment.



As part of the project wonderful equipment has been bought to help children in the home to sit and stand.

## New Family Support Project

Thanks to a grant from the **US Embassy in Minsk**, 'Supporting Children Together' has just started a new project in Gomel Region. Working in the districts of Chechersk, Dobrush and Buda-

Koshilova they will be using all the skills and techniques learned during the UNICEF project over the last couple of years to support families with children with disabilities.

Using case management and a child centred approach, they will be encouraging all services – education, health and social protection – to work together to meet the developmental and social needs of the children in the project, and to give their families the advice, support and encouragement they need.

Training programmes have already taken pace in each of the districts covering complex assessment of the children's needs and the principles of case management.

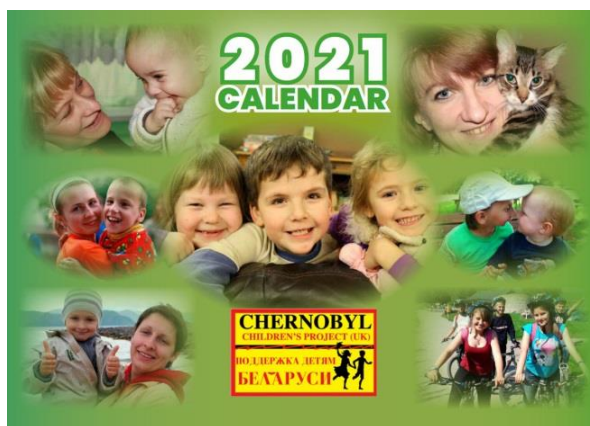




We have a special calendar for 2021! As the pandemic meant we were not able to bring children over for a holiday or to send volunteers to visit Belarus this year, we have selected some of the most popular pictures from past calendars. There are photos of happy holidays in the UK and in Belarus, of our



Family Homes and our other projects in Belarus. You can buy a Calendar for £4 or three for £10.



We have a limited number of Christmas cards this year. This is our most popular design ever so get your order in quickly if you would like some of these. See the website for other designs and to place your order, or use the enclosed order form, to order packs of cards for £3.50.

## Our Shop in Crook

Our shop has been open again since the end of June. Gerald and all his volunteers worked hard to make the space Covid safe whilst being as welcoming as ever. There is a screen at the



sales counter, everything is well spaced and with lots of hand sanitiser in evidence.



The shop is not open every day, to allow time for safely sorting the donations, but is still making a good profit to support the children of Belarus as well as being an important hub for the local community.

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

*We are very grateful to all the individual donors, businesses, trusts and foundations, local authorities, church and peace groups, our own group co-ordinators and host families, trainers and sanatorium volunteers who continue to give so much time, energy and financial support to the children of Belarus and who have been supported us through the pandemic.*

***Special Thanks to 'Action for Disability' Trust, Godel Technologies and Persula Foundation for their generous support..***

**Executive Director:** Linda Walker 01457 863534 07976 653610 ccprojectuk@gmail.com

**National Treasurer & Groups Co-ordinator:** Catherine McElholm 07747 775218 cath.mcelholm@gmail.com

**Training Co-ordinator:** Geoff Wright Geoff\_wright70@hotmail.com

**Volunteer Co-ordinator:** Lynne Murphy lynncm@live.co.uk **Webmaster:** Brian Hardwick brian.hardwick@ntlworld.com

**Trustees and Management Team:** John Gater Brian Hardwick Cath McElholm Linda Walker  
Julie Gater Lynne Murphy Margie Haslop Denis Moors Helena Gannon Kath Ruane

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