

BRITISH HUMANITARIAN AID NEWS OCTOBER 2016

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Current Situation

We are grateful for the aid donations that continue to be generous but we are almost at the stage where we need to stop taking in more. While a few have helped recently, in general the number of financial donations that we need to cover running the vehicles, storage both here and in Ukraine, help for the Aratta organisation and our trips to distribute the aid in Ukraine, and support for worthwhile projects, sadly, have not matched our supporters desire to donate unwanted goods

Vaganichi Home for the Elderly

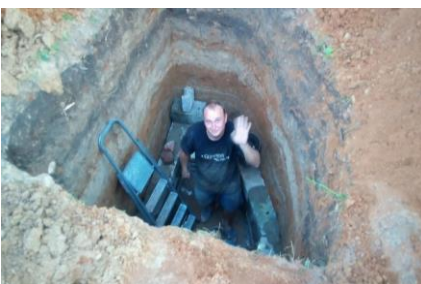
The situation in the centre of the village, close to the two shops and the church, is ideal but it is also close to fields and to the ancient park. The wild life close at hand is extremely diverse.



During the recent trip we were able to put in a good spell of renovation at the old school building. It was great to have help from Ura, Zennia, Kola, Masha, Vova and Vika from the foster family and between us we have managed to get three ex-classrooms ready for habitation.



Sergei has kindly been busy with the borehole for the water system. In the kitchen work has also progressed and once the electrics in the building have been upgraded can easily be serviceable, with all power sockets removed from the lighting wiring! Ex King's School shower cabinets and toilet partitions will soon complete the work on the washrooms.



There were originally three options for the running of the home. Option one, to run it as a private "home" was not really practical as there is no-one available who has sufficient business skills. An alternative of gifting it to the local Territorial Service, the department of social care that deals with the elderly, was also impossible because the Chernihiv home is only 50% full and they will not fund support elsewhere. For them it is just a question of numbers and they don't consider the wishes of old people from the villages that have no wish to live in the city.

The only option left is for the church to take over the running, as is already done successfully in Tupichev. They are interested but we will have to look carefully at balancing of expenses against income from the residents pensions. Although some were very keen to see it open already we will have to spend a considerable amount of time and effort to make sure we have all the necessary documents and safety certificates that will be required for legal opening. The local priest, Father Vitalik, will certainly need support in the early days maybe we can find some UK churches that would consider supporting him.

Aid distribution

All the Aratta centres were still trying to recover from the exhausting inspections carried out by the authorities during the summer break. This is a new initiative from the government but the amount of paperwork required for scrutiny was considerable. All are extremely grateful for the regular supplies of aid that they get.



Chernihiv Aratta is slowly moving from dependence upon phone calls to greater use of emails and despite the problems imposed by the authorities' insistence on unwieldy levels of paperwork, we are currently trying to upgrade the allocation of aid so that both quantities and content are appropriate for the type and number of the clients served by the various organisations. We distributed a lorry load early September.

Deliveries and Visits

The Logos Charity in Chernihiv, deals with mentally handicapped young adults. Currently they are trying to refurbish their elderly building and hope to incorporate a teaching kitchen, an aroma therapy room and a sensory area. We are able to help with some of the stuff for the kitchen and also with curtain and upholstery fabric so that

they can renovate their furniture. They would love some beanbag type seating.

Nizhin Town Territorial Service has been visited before but they now, for the last year, have had a new director who has energetically created a home for the elderly in the lower rooms of their office building. She has done a fantastic job and the joyful occupation by 29 residents was obvious. My translator, Svieta, donated a child's musical toy to one resident who insisted on dancing happily to the music.



Koriokovka Territorial Service helps 1500 refugees, extremely poor pensioners and invalids. They have a great need for disability aids. They also, as with many other services, need bicycles to get to their supported villages. It has at least become easier for them to register people so that they can receive aid. They have a wide range of needs both for their clients and for the 27 clubs that they run weekly.

Chernihiv Internat has just has a new director, Alexander Alexyovich. He reached retirement age in the Militia but wanted to have a further purpose in life. It is a boarding school whose 234 pupils (6 to 16 years) include a small number of orphans, who suffer badly from the lack of a parental example, displaced Ukrainian children who have suffered obvious trauma and children from the villages whose parents may or may not have jobs, but would like their children to have a better education. These children often arrive lacking even basic education at 8/9 yrs. He would love to have some visual aids. Many of the seniors specialise in sport and Alexander is very keen on providing a practical that will ready the youngsters for life in a region that has limited employment opportunities.

He is also introducing a class for military training as part of the country's present initiative "Protection of the Motherland". In view of Russia's current aggression I think most of us can understand this need. They are lucky to have huge grounds much of which is underused and a project for next year is for every class to have a garden. Our local Wyevale had some "out of date" seeds that they happily donated. (We could always do with more if anyone else can get some!) He would also love to create some form of community identity and would be really grateful for any unwanted school uniform, also sports clothing (especially for 8-10 year olds).

Philip G Edmonds