

The Belarus Fund
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The Belarus Fund
Registered Charity No.
1116762
Supporting victims of
Chernobyl in Belarus

In Partnership with



*The White Flower
Charity*

Trustees Annual Report 2022-2023

Introduction.

This year has been a challenging one for the charity, both for fundraising and for delivering the services of the charity. The fundraising activities have been limited by the ongoing effects of the of the Covid pandemic, despite the lifting of lockdown rules and the opening up of society. The ongoing situation in Eastern Europe and the resulting uncertainties have meant continuing to operate remotely as far as the UK is concerned, but in Belarus the work has continued.

Thanks to our team resident in Belarus, the work of the charity has been continuing. This work is focussed upon the support scheme and existing projects. We have been unable to undertake additional projects as we cannot visit to vet the potential projects. We feel that this approach secures the resources of the charity and ensures that the support given is verifiable and robust. The work of the teams in Belarus ensures that this continues to be the case.

Communication.

Zoom, WhatsApp, emails and Skype have proved to be very effective in Keeping in contact with the volunteers working in Belarus. We are able to provide directives and plans for the charity work and to receive feedback on progress and how things are working out for the recipients of resources.

Carrying out the work of the charity.

Still, it remains most frustrating that we have not been able to visit Belarus during the year. We continue receiving feedback through Nicolai and Oleg (in Belarus) that the folks there have missed our visits and regularly ask when they will see their English friends. We have been able to have two face to face meetings, one with Nicolai and one with Oleg when they were able to travel to spend time with us.

Throughout the year the work has continued:

- Reviewing Projects

- Discussing fundraising
- Receiving feedback on what is happening
- Talking about when visits to Belarus can recommence
- Monitoring the finances of the charity
- Regulatory requirements
- How to achieve best practice
- Planning for the future

Doing these things have enabled us to achieve the objectives of the charity. However, paramount has been the enthusiasm, commitment and dedication of the folks in Belarus. Their resilience in these difficult times has been amazing.

Objectives of the charity.

To employ a variety of fundraising methods to achieve a target of £20,000 The actual amount raised was £38,450.35. This involved a single donation of £10,000. We will continue with the existing target as a matter of expediency.

The people in Belarus continually thank God for the generosity of all the donors in the UK.

To recruit volunteer helpers for the work of the charity in the UK

We are able to function with the current number of volunteers but are aware of the age profile of our volunteers is increasing and the need for involving younger people. Sadly, we have been unable to increase the numbers.

To identify appropriate projects in Belarus

Under the present circumstances, we do not feel it is appropriate to take on new projects but do receive information from Belarus which we hope to be able to consider in the future.

To liaise with the White Flower charity in Belarus through visits and electronic communication.

Visits to Belarus are not advised by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Electronic communication is our most effective means of communicating.

To transfer funds to Belarus to finance identified projects agreed by the trustees.

The necessary funds have been securely transferred to Belarus but bank fees have been incurred.

To supervise projects working with children, adults, people with disabilities and older people in Belarus.

The work has continued, carried out by our colleagues and volunteers in Belarus, who continue to keep us fully informed. The safety and wellbeing of these folks remains of paramount importance

To operate appropriate administration systems and reporting mechanisms to ensure the proper deployment of resources and the proper running of the charity.

The administrative systems and reporting mechanisms remain fit for purpose and enable the running of the charity and keep trustees and UK supporters informed.

To liaise with other charities and funders where appropriate.

We continue to work with our American partners* and, jointly, we have financed some provision for specific small projects

To report activities to the Charity Commission.

This is done through the trustees' report and Annual Return to the Charity Commission.

To operate appropriate financial systems.

The financial systems of the charity are transparent and robust. Detail expenditure is recorded electronically and in a bank statement file. Expenditure is monitored at the end of each month, thus enabling the charity to remain in credit. These record in detail the income and expenditure of the charity, gift aiding and small donations gift aiding. A copy of the balance sheet for 2022-2023 accompanies this report. We never spend money we have not already raised.

Public Benefit Statement.

Much of the work done by the charity is ongoing and is listed below:-

1. The White Flower charity continues to work as our partner in Belarus, serving as the vital link to the network of projects around Belarus.
2. The ongoing support of an architect, who is a trustee of the charity, to assist a church to convert a derelict building into a church and community centre, at no cost. The church runs a range of community activities and is involving the local community who live around the church building.
3. The Borisov Abandoned Babies Home continues to receive funding for prioritised needs and welcomes our continuing involvement.
4. Continued funding of individual people and families on the support scheme receiving monthly monies from UK sponsors and general fundraising. Some families receive an additional support amount because of the complex needs within the family.
5. Funding of training and education to combat human trafficking.
6. Support for outreach work done by the Hope of Salvation Pentecostal Church in asylums around Minsk. They also undertake camps for children at special times of the year, for example, at Christmas. They selflessly give of their own time and it is a privilege to be able to support this important work.
7. Family food parcels in the Grodno region. These are distributed in the "Forgotten Villages" in isolated locations in the border regions with Poland.
8. Art and Craft materials for young women to earn a living. Life is difficult for these sisters as their health continues to deteriorate. The second sister has had the second hip replaced. The cost of these hip replacements has been shared with DCHA our American charity partner.
9. Christmas gifts for children in an abandoned babies' home.
10. Christmas gifts for children.
11. Christmas programs for families.
12. Christmas gifts for poor families.
13. Gifts for elderly people living alone.
14. Firewood for families on the support scheme.
15. Outreach work by the Grace church in Grodno (social and material support).
16. Support for disabled children in Minsk at Leila's education centre. This is ongoing.

17. Support for anti-human trafficking work.
18. Support for countering domestic violence.
19. Support for an elderly person's social group.
20. Travel costs to enable visits to ex-prisoners detained in WWII.
21. Incontinence supplies for bedridden people.
22. Backpacks and educational materials for children from poor families.
23. Financial support for one day per week for the Project Manager in Belarus, and Director in Belarus for one day per week. All other workers are volunteers.
24. Education programme for Miron with partner DCHA.
25. Special food for Lisa with PKU. Also partnered with DCHA.
26. Purchase of medicines.
27. Additional support for people with Covid.
28. Support for Ukrainian refugees arriving in Belarus.

Throughout this year, we have again been consolidating the work of the charity, so most of the public benefit is still a continuation of what the charity has already been doing. The needs being met are mostly long term in nature. Any new approaches in Belarus are being assessed by our colleagues there. However, meeting these needs is constrained by the resources we can get to the workers in Belarus.

We continue to work to ensure compliance with the requirements of GDPR and to operate within the law. The charity still does not directly approach people for funds, but rather relies up giving information and then following up where interest is expressed. This has been our strategy throughout and has proved successful.

The work of the charity continues but has lost the benefit of face-to-face interaction with the beneficiaries. Fortunately, technology continues to enable forms of personal contact (email, Zoom, Skype and WhatsApp) with the project manager and Director. This has been vital to the fulfilment of our purposes. Being able to meet them outside the country has been of great importance and benefit, but still remains second best to in-country visits.

Sadly, 2023-24 will be another challenging year as we cope with the restrictions forced upon us by not being able to travel to Belarus. Also, the geopolitical situation resulting from the war in Ukraine continues to be a major concern. We are prepared to meet these challenges and look forward to when we can reinstate our visits to Belarus and have first-hand experience of the impact of the work of the charity.

We remain extremely grateful for the wonderful generosity of our supporters, without whom the work of the charity could not continue

On behalf of the Trustees and with heartfelt thanks,
Alan Bridgewater
Charity Secretary, Treasurer and Trustee
July 2023.

*Direct Connect Humanitarian Aid and Birds of Pray, both USA based charities.

BELARUS FUND STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FROM 6th APRIL 2022 TO 5th APRIL 2023

Current Account

	Total	PAYMENTS	Sterling
		Sent to Belarus	£33,515.76
Donations Gift Aided	£18,534.84	Flights and Accommodation	£1,607.32
Non Gift Aid Donations	£18,970.00		
GASDS donations	£935.55		
Interest	£10.45		

Contra item Remaining Currency from cancelled visi \$2085

Totals **£38,450.84**

Bank Balance at 6th. April 2022 **£6,568.01**

Total Spend **£35,123.08**

Balance at	Totals	
Balance at	5th April 2023	£1,184.80
	5th April 2022(less)	£6,568.01

Money withdrawn **£35,123.08**

Deposit Account

***Balance** **£8,835.04** **Interest on Bus Acc.** **£10.45**

Total raised **£38,450.84**

*Note

Balance April 2022 =£23.87
plus interest = £10.45
plus money from current account = £15,000
minus money to current account =£6198.98

Gives balance of £8835.04

The Belarus Fund

Registered Charity 1116762

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Belarus Fund

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 5th April 2023,, which are set out on the Belarus Fund Statement of Accounts from 6th April 2022 to 5th April 2023.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met; nor

(2) which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

The accounts and financial statement, as presented, represent a true and accurate record of the charity's account.

Name: Susan Margaret Selby

Profession: Retired Pharmacist / Store Manager for Boots the Chemist

Address: 118, Overdale Rd, Romiley, Stockport. Cheshire SK6 3EN.

Signature:



Date: 21.07.2023