

# CCLL APRIL NEWSLETTER 2009

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BRITISH AIRWAYS

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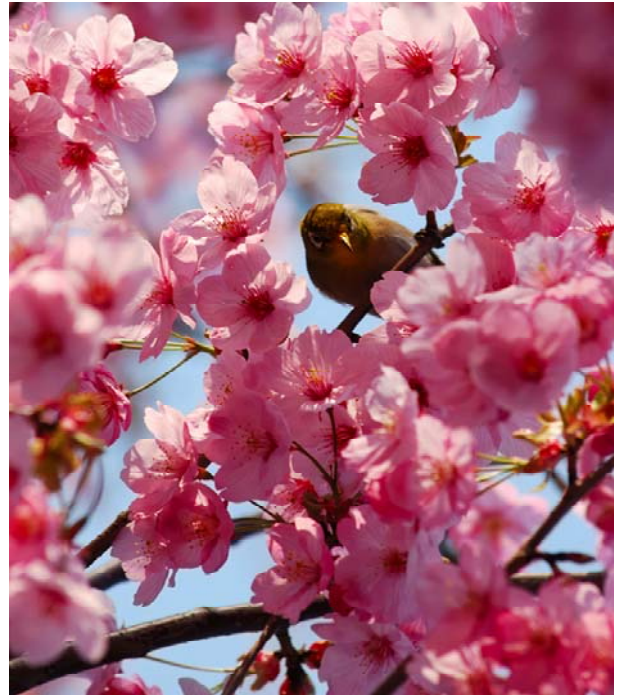


AND



**Distribution:** *To All Link Chairpersons  
for Full Distribution*

**From:** *Victor E Mizzi, Chairman/Trustee*



## **Victor Writes:**

*UPDATE: Both the UK Border Agency and the Belarussian Government have been communicating with each other. I have seen the proposed Agreement and there are a number of hidden issues which need to be clarified and sorted out prior to it being signed. I will keep you updated with any further progress.*

*One issue is that same sex couples cannot host children. The Law in the UK differs from that of Belarus. These are Belarussian children and I think that all charities should abide by their wishes. I fully appreciate that this is a very delicate issue and one that hurts many good people.*

*The Ukraine programme is doing well. We have now had five groups arrive: Haslemere, Pembrokeshire, Devizes, Ayrshire and Mansfield and all have been doing well and the Links have been happy with the outcome.*

*The children are, in many ways, no different from those of Belarus. They have the same health*

*problems, in particular with their teeth. The dentists have been surprised and feel that it is impossible for the children not to be in pain. Reports indicate that the children are very confident in themselves. I am very happy with the Leaders; this is the first time they have travelled to the UK.*

*CCLL is a prospering charity and always moves forward to cope with the issues and problems as and when they arise. I am more than glad to have started this programme for Ukraine; it has kept the Charity alive and the Links active – a Link which becomes inactive will eventually disintegrate and die.*

*In all my Newsletters I have stated that Links must have an active Committee and not just meet a few months before the children arrive but hold regularly meetings and raising funds, socially and as a team. Success brings success and the more successful the Committee the bigger the Link becomes. Some write to say that they cannot find host families. Believe me they are there. Many Links are inviting groups of 20+ and some Links*

have two groups a year, winter and summer – one Link has 54 children! To get Host Families contact your local newspaper, write a good article with photographs; contact your local radio station, talk at school assemblies and tell the children about Chernobyl. These children will then go home and talk to their parents. Get the support of the Head Teachers.

My advertising has been a success. We get many emails from people wanting to host. We send these to the Links and yet some do not take the trouble of following them up. I ask why?

I never forget that we are doing this work voluntarily; Chairs and their Committee members have jobs and families as well but once we have accepted these positions we have a responsibility to make a good job of it – these children depend so much on what we do.

I realize that some Links are finding it difficult to invite a group this year but please remember that by not inviting a group, however small it may result in the Link members losing interest and drifting away from the Charity.

Then there is the question of the recession which, of course, effects Links with the loss of Host Families but also with less donations. When a Link acts collectively they succeed in raising funds and this was illustrated to me when on 08<sup>th</sup> March I was at Gatwick meeting a group of children from Ukraine and I was informed by the Link that the night before they had held a fund-raising event and managed to raise £23,000! To be able to raise such sums you need to offer a really good evening and if Links join together you will be able to get such results. I look to the Area Coordinators to get the Links together to organize such events.

I have recently been appointing Area Coordinators to assist me and one of their main purposes is get the Links in their area to cooperate and help each other collectively and build on their successes. Just imagine what 12 Links could manage to achieve by pooling their resources for a major event – I leave you with that thought.

I have sent out a memo asking as many people as possible to have a coffee morning near to the anniversary of Chernobyl on 26<sup>th</sup> April. If every coffee morning raised £200, added together this will be a large sum resulting in more children being helped.

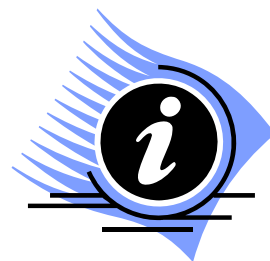
This Charity has many good people, in fact, I would say remarkable people who give their time freely and are devoted to our cause. They have changed the lives of so many children who, in turn, have changed our lives. We have all become richer by the experiences we have shared; riches are not always counted in terms of money but by what we are capable of giving to others – you all know what I mean.

What makes me sad now is that I do not see the other charities at Gatwick Airport these days – come on officials, sign that Agreement!

On the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2009 H.E Dr Nigel Gould-Davies, our Ambassador, asked us, among other charities, to call a mini-conference as he wants to meet as many people as possible. The Ambassador is very active and very supportive and I hope that many of you will attend. The conference is being held at the S.I.M.T.R. Conference Centre, 1a Damson Parkway, Solihull, West Midlands P91 2PP, registration at 11.00am.. The cost is £13 per delegate and if you wish to attend please contact either Claire Chettoe: [Claire@entadsl.com](mailto:Claire@entadsl.com) or Linda Walker: [ccprojectuk@gmail.com](mailto:ccprojectuk@gmail.com) or by phone on 01457 862112 or 863534.

Don't let any negative news you may hear damage our work, our spirit or, above all, our determination.

## **BELAVIA FLIGHTS - CHANGES TO FLIGHT TIMINGS**



### **GATWICK:**

Please be aware that the timings for the Friday flights (June through to the end of August) into Gatwick Airport have changed and are as follows:

Depart Minsk: 09.40 Arrive Gatwick: 10.40  
Flight No.: B2-851

Depart Gatwick: 11.50 Arrive Minsk: 16.45  
Flight No.: B2-852

**I ask that those groups / individuals booked on a Friday flight to arrive at Gatwick by approximately 9.30am and to make themselves known to me when they do so.**

## **MANCHESTER:**

*Depart Minsk: 13.55 Arrive Manch: 15.15  
Flight No.: B2-853*

*Depart Manch: 16.15 Arrive Minsk: 21.15  
Flight No.: B2-854*

*Host Families to be at airport by: 14.00 for both  
incoming and departing flights.*

## **CHANGES TO HOST FAMILIES**

*I ask Links to please remember that it is a priority to inform the Haslemere office if there is any change to the Host Family once the children are here. We have to inform the Border Agency and give them the details for the new Host Family (names, CRB/CRBS numbers, address, tel. no.) together with the reason for the move.*

*Your cooperation in this matter is most important.*

## **CRB**

*I am pleased to report that February has seen a rise in the number of disclosure forms being submitted by Links and I urge any Links who have summer groups booked and still have host families to clear to submit the applications without delay.*

*A few Links will remember the problems caused last year where host families hadn't received their disclosure certificates back from CRB and as a consequence had to be taken off the invitation and substitutions made. This caused great disappointment to those expecting to host not to mention a considerable amount of extra paperwork here in Haslemere and Minsk.*

*The CRB are endeavouring to make the process more efficient and to this end we now have to predict how many applications we are likely to submit in any one month (quite difficult as you can imagine!)*

*They are also monitoring return rates for forms and are phasing in a 'three strikes and you are out' process. This is aimed at lowering the registered Signatory (Victor and Sue) return-form error rate to below 5%. I am happy to say that we have a very low return rate of 1% but this is primarily because errors are spotted before the forms are submitted to CRB, however, it would be appreciated if persons*

*dealing with CRB for the Links could be vigilant in checking the forms over before submitting them to me.*

*One error which is automatically logged against us and which we have no control over is when forms are sent direct to the CRB with Section Y either incorrectly completed by someone within the Link or left completely blank. Section Y must be left completely blank as it can only be completed by either Victor or Sue as Registered Signatories.*

*Can I ask that on the disclosure application form in Section B no.13 the position applied for is always 'Host Family' regardless of the applicants position within a Link e.g. driver, helper. This is the criteria under which CRB process our applications and it also ensures that everyone is checked to the highest level.*

*With regard to driving licenses can I just clarify that a paper licence is usually the old style licence and is marked as paper on the form. A photo card licence does have a paper counterpart but is marked as photo card only on the form.*

*It is Charity Policy that the Chairperson or nominated CRB checker within the Link cannot verify their own disclosure application form or that of immediate family.*

## **CRBS**

*The system seems to be working well and if any Links wish to add an additional Signatory please get in touch and I will send out the relevant forms. It is a good idea to have more than one Signatory in place to cover in the eventuality of illness etc as it can take a little time for all the relevant checks to be carried out and for a Signatory to be up and running.*

*I think the main issues are to check that the applicant has at least one form of photographic I.D and one form of I.D with their address shown. Also, although the minimum requirement on the form is the year in which the applicant moved in to a property if the month is specified then it must be exactly five years to the month back from the date the form was signed.*

*Finally, for both CRB and CRBS can you e-mail me on [crb@chernobylchildlifeline.org](mailto:crb@chernobylchildlifeline.org), write or*

*phone me direct if you require forms, help or advice.*

**All completed CRB/CRBS disclosure application forms must be submitted to the Haslemere office for the attention of Sue.**

*I do thank all those who undertake the processing of disclosure forms on behalf of the Links. I know it is not always easy but it does help to ensure the safety of the children we bring over and we do have a very good system in place.*

*Best Wishes – Sue*



## **SCOTTISH LINKS CLARIFICATION**

*CCLL is registered with OSCR and NOT the Scottish Links. A Link is NOT the Charity. Only Haslemere deals with OSCR.*

*Please do not ignore this directive.*

*If you have any queries please contact me directly.  
Thanks, Victor*

## **TRIBUTE TO RITA DEVLIN**

**A Founder Member of the Ayrshire Link  
This Ceilidh is dedicated to the memory of  
Rita who sadly passed away on the 17<sup>th</sup>  
September 2008.**

**By Colin Macdonald, Chairman Ayrshire Link**

*It was my privilege to know Rita almost from the start of the Ayrshire Link of the charity. She was an inaugural member and if it was not for her support and encouragement in the early days it is doubtful if the Link would still exist.*

*Rita loved people and formed a special bond with the child victims of the Chernobyl Disaster and their families. With the support of her husband, William, they hosted thirty-three children since the Link was formed; some more than once. Typical of this was Marina who lived in terrible conditions; the daughter of alcoholic parents. Rita ensured the funding was available to bring Marina back a second time and now that girl is happily married with a family in Belarus due in no small part of the care and generosity of Rita.*

*The departure at Glasgow Airport is always an emotional time for host families and children alike and Rita, like most, shed a tear or two. Rita, however, had her own unique way of dealing with it. As soon as she got in the car with William she wiped her tears and started planning for the next two children. For her there was no decision to be made. She hosted each and every visit.*

*Rita gave the same love and attention to her family and her local community and will be sadly missed by all who had the privilege to know her. She was a very special human being who changed the lives of people both in Belarus and here.*

*I count it an honour to have known her as a colleague and a friend.*

## **FEEDBACK FROM UKRAINE**

*(Typed as written)*

*“Dear Members of Chernobyl Children's Lifeline This is a brief note to thank you for all your hard work.*

*My colleagues from other centres and I received several feedbacks from other leaders currently staying with children in the UK. They are simply stunned by the level and quality of hosting and programme organised. Even those leaders who have accompanied groups of children to other countries (Spain, Italy, Slovakia) before commented that they have never seen anything like it! I quote some of them: "The children are squealing with enjoyment from hospitality; so do the leaders".*

*Our local Mayor of Korosten has recently called a meeting to discuss issues of health recuperation. Following the meeting he has issued an order to appoint responsible "trustees" for the selection of the children thus making heads of participating schools together with the Head of Education Department personally responsible for the quality of selection subject to criteria put forwards by CCL.*

*It has also been ordered for the TV crew to meet the first group of children arriving from the UK to get children's first impressions and ideas about their time in Britain. This will be broadcast all across our region.*

*With words of gratitude, Sergei Vygovski  
Head "Community Development Centre, Korosten"*

**UKRAINE**  
**THE FIRST GROUPS FROM UKRAINE**  
**ARRIVING IN THE UK**



*Children from Korosten hosted by Ayrshire Link arriving at Gatwick on 08 March 2009*



*Children from Borodyanka hosted by Pembrokeshire Link arriving at Gatwick on 15 February 2009*



*Children from Kyiv region hosted by Devizes Link arriving at Gatwick on 18 February 2009*



*Children from Borodyanka hosted by Mansfield Link arriving at Gatwick on 22 February 2009*



*Children from Borodyanka hosted by Haslemere Link arriving at Gatwick on 25 February 2009*

**FIRST GROUP OF CHILDREN FROM**  
**UKRAINE VISIT THE NORTH**  
**PEMBROKESHIRE LINK**

*Our first group of ten children (eight girls and two boys aged 10 and 11) arrived very excitedly at Gatwick Airport together with their Group Leader Mrs Tatiana Soshko. Our first impressions of them were that they appeared much the same as the Belarus children – as pale and thin as usual but raring to go. They were obviously well prepared by their Leader beforehand as she had called several meetings for all the children and their families to get to know each other. They were greeted by their host parents six hours later – presents and letters from their parents were given to their hosts and they settled in for their first night ever in a foreign land. They were very excited to wake up in their new environment but eager to make friends and absorb their new surroundings.*

*We have a policy of bringing the group together very quickly after their arrival in order to offset the chance of any homesickness. So the next day we met in the village hall for fun and games, refreshments and the clothing share-out – with all hosts and children together for the afternoon. Soon, those of us who had studied a little Russian realised that the children's first language was Ukrainian and all conversation between the children and the children and their leader were in their Mother tongue however they all had a good understanding of Russian.*

*It became obvious to us that we had been very lucky in the choice of our leader. Her English was extremely good and the behaviour of all the children exemplary. They adapted well to the British diet and were not slow to experiment with all the new foods on offer to them. Their appetite was generally very good and they soon began to glow with rosy cheeks and to put on weight. They did not like the windy weather often experienced on our westerly coasts as they were unused to it but over all we have been very lucky to enjoy all our numerous outings (about four or five days a week) in spring-like conditions.*

*Their dental checks resulted in several fillings and quite a few extractions which two of the children wanted to have at home when their mothers could be with them. Fortunately the visit to the optician resulted in no further treatment. Nobody has had the need to visit the doctor.*

*When the children phoned home (especially on Mother's Day) their parents were waiting for the children to say how much they were missing home. Instead they mostly stressed to their families what a great time they were having and how glad they were to be here in 'England'. We failed to impress on them how they were in **Wales** in spite of their having celebrated St. David's day in the Cathedral in St. David's with the local schools. Everywhere they went people always wanted to give them treats and presents and commented on how well-behaved they were. They were tickled pink to see their photos in our local press. We brought them together in class one morning a week where they were given some 'Fun with English' and learned some of our traditional songs with actions. These they performed in one of our elderly people's homes. Their leader was very helpful to the English teacher as she had no knowledge of Russian or Ukrainian.*

*The children's response to the host families was very positive also – they soon grew attached and relished*

*the hugs and cuddles giving response likewise. The host families really didn't want to part with the children and said that the time had passed too quickly. Hosts said that their tiredness was small price to pay for the reward of having these delightful children in their homes. Nobody reported any bad behaviour at all and the children seemed very well-adjusted children. The response from the host families was positive and nobody experienced any problems barring a small amount of homesickness – this soon passed off after a few days. Our groups are mainly hosted for two weeks in one family and then move on to a second family. This is because the younger hosts have to return to work and us oldies haven't got the staying power – "the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."*

***We would like to say to anyone thinking of hosting – don't hesitate – just do it! The rewards for you are immeasurable. And we all know how the results of this respite for the children are the chance of renewed immunity and therefore better general health; thus increasing their chances of avoiding perhaps serious or life-threatening illnesses. What more could a host family want?***

*Comment from Bryon and Carole Alabaster:  
"We have all been thrilled to bits with this group – the children were so manageable and happy. We have enjoyed them immensely."*



## **FUND-RAISING WEEK OF 26 APRIL 2009**

*Recently I sent a memo to all Links and members of CCLL asking each member Link to make an effort during this week to raise money for the Charity and so beat the recession and reduced interest rates paid on our capital in the bank.*

*We all have a circle of friends and one idea is to hold a coffee morning with a "bring and buy" sale.*

*Those of you who have children still at school, or who are Governors or teachers could organize a mufti day at school. This could bring in a lot of money – think of a school with a thousand pupils!*

*Those who smoke could arrange sponsorship to stop smoking.*

*Anyone who would like to lose a few pounds in weight here is your chance to lose some pounds to gain some pounds by being sponsored.*

*These are just a few suggestions but I'm sure you can think of many more we could all do. As I have said in my memo, those who raise the most money will be awarded two seats on Belavia but to enter you must have raised at least £200 (in my memo I said £300, but I have now reduced this by £100).*

*Collectively we could raise a lot of money, bring awareness and also find more families who are happy to host the children.*

*Now is the time when we must work collectively to raise funds and work collectively for our common cause. CCLL, with all its Links is one Charity; Chernobyl Children's Lifeline.*

### **POLICY MANUAL**

*A lot of work has been done on the Policy Manual to replace the one in present circulation and has been compiled by Elizabeth Parker. This will incorporate the recommendations made by the NSPCC.*

*This Policy Manual will cover all aspects of our operation which will include child protection and a code of conduct for Hosts visiting Belarus and repeat invitation. Once the document is completed a copy will be sent to each Link Chair. It is important to note that when a Chair retires this document must be passed on to the new incoming Chair.*

*From time to time updates will be sent to the Chair who is responsible to ensure that these amendments are made to the document, i.e. old pages removed and destroyed and the new pages added.*

*These documents are costly to produce and it is not a document to stay in a drawer but must be referred to on all matters regarding the Charity.*

### **UKRAINIAN CONNECTIONS**

*In many areas there are Ukrainian clubs, shops, business families and churches. Do please make contact with them and tell them of our Ukrainian project. Try and encourage them to host, to help fund raise and explain to them that they will be helping their own nation's children.*

***Find out if they have a local paper and take out an advertisement.***

***I urge you not to waste this opportunity to bring new people into the Charity to help the Ukrainian children.***

### **THE FOLLOWING LINKS HAVE ALREADY RAISED INVITATIONS FOR 2009 – GOOD WORK!**

Aberdeen	Ashbourne
Romney Marsh	Ayrshire (2)
Billericay	Birmingham
Blackpool	Bonsall
Bournemouth	Brackley
Bristol	Cambridge
Cheshire	Chernobyl NE
Chester	Dandelion
Derby	Devizes
Doncaster	Dundee
E Dunbartonshire	Dunfermline
Edinburgh	Great Yarmouth
Guernsey	Haslemere
Inverness	Island Hosts
Lanarkshire	Lee-on-Solent
Lincoln	Little Stars
Maidstone	Malvern
Mansfield	Mid Suffolk
Mid Surrey	Wolverhampton
Mid Devon	Mid Glamorgan
Middlesborough	Nairn
Newbury	Newark
North Cornwall	North Durham
Oldham	Peak Fringe
Pembrokeshire	Perth
Pinxton	Plymouth
Poole	Portsmouth
Red Rose	Rhyl & Prestatyn
Richmond	Seaham
Scottish Borders	Sheffield
Shrewsbury	Southampton
St Ives	Standish
Swansea	Swindon
Tamar	Teignbridge
Tewkesbury	Thurrock
Tyne Valley	Wirral
Wiltshire South	Wiltshire West
Winchester	Woking & Surrey Heath

*....more to come.....*

## **A SUCCESSFUL UKRAINIAN VISIT**

*We are now two thirds of the way through the visit by fourteen children from Ukraine. Our first impressions of the children were that they seem to be suffering more health problems than usual and that the selection of the children by the authorities in Korosten took this criteria into mind along with the fact that there are also more children from one parent families through being widowed rather than any other marital problems. There is no difference in these children from others from Belarus, all are needy of the things that we all try to achieve. But these children have come with no expectations and are just bewildered by all the activities that they are doing of course all the children have their own needs and personalities and most have settled quickly, whilst two have needed a little more time to adjust. This as been achieved by the support and skills of our two leaders Olga and Gylena who are teachers from the school this has also been the first time travel to the UK for them.*

*On the first day we always have an induction meeting with the leaders and the children myself and the Family Host Coordinator go through the basic requirements of procedure for behaviour and safety aspects that we must have.*

*There are always a few worried faces at this but it is soon over come when we start to show them the programme of events we have in store for them. There were whoops of delight at all the events both from the children and the leaders.*

*So far in the three weeks they have been here:*

*The usual welcome party on the first full day, this is great just to see them all together in their new outfits all dancing and attacking the buffet.*

*We followed next by their first visit to the opticians and then off to the swimming baths, and again they loved the water it is some thing that they do not do in Korosten very often.*

*The visit to the dentist always goes down exactly the same not keen on this event but who can blame them!*

*Our local Centre Parcs always provides us with free admission for all our visitors and the host families and is always a great day out for all. The first major event was a visit to The Deep in Hull which is both educational and fun -along with the compulsory visit to McDonalds and, of course, McDs is a favourite of all children. A visit to the local Fire station is always a fun day for the kids and our local fire men*

*and women are just great at keeping them all amused and feeding us all well.*

*Our next visit was to Twycross Zoo again a great day for all (though we did have to keep one or two host families away from the monkey house because they where stocktaking!).*

*On the second Saturday we visited London and this proved to be the one thing that they were most excited about, we travelled by fast train to Kings Cross and made our way to the London Eye after which the group made their own way around the tourist sites.*

*We spent Monday at an educational environment school where the children enjoyed various outdoor activities under guidance of the head master.*

*Wednesday found us at Twin Lakes Adventure Playground again a great day for the Children*

*So we now have our trip to the Sea side - Natureland at Skegness this will be on Saturday.*

*In the last week we will be going to York where we will be greeted by the Lord Mayor and then the Tour guides of the city will show all the important sites followed by a visit to the Viking Center and ride.*

*It will be wind down time through the week with ten pin bowling and a visit into Sherwood Forest, finishing off the visit with our Farewell party at Center Parcs.*

*In all of this it is the aim of the link to have helped the children with their English language skills to improve their confidence and to have benefited from good fresh. I am sure that the host families would like to keep in touch with the children as so often happens with the Belarus children and that we can forge new friendships with families in Ukraine.*

*Lastly I feel that the children and the leaders have benefited in many ways from their experiences of the visit not least in gaining the love and affection of their English families. We all feel that it has been an honour to have met and befriended these children and leaders and to be able to contribute towards the well-being of a child and this is a privilege to which every host parent is dedicated.*

*John Leatherland, Chairman Mansfield and Ashfield*