

The Beckmead Trust Newsletter



The Beckmead Express headed off for the fourth time to deliver humanitarian aid on 21st October 2022.



This time we headed much further south to Kroscienko which literally means 'The Crossing Place'. We achieved great value in our purchasing with long term partners 3food4u (Pesh and Jonty pictured above) and new partners Cut Price Wholesaler Edenbridge. A big thanks to Samantha and Usef at Lidl also in Edenbridge for being super helpful when they realised who the goods were for.



The vans were even fuller than usual and for the first time we were able to take industrially packaged medicine including paracetamol, ibuprofen, Calpol, Benylin, Vaseline and Johnson's baby oil and talc.

The trip this time was longer, approximately 2,700 miles in 53 ¼ hours. As we turned off the beaten track we were amazed by the beautiful Eastern Polish mountains and were captivated by hour after hour of stunning scenery.

We were well and truly off the map, this was highlighted when we crossed a loose boarded wooden bridge with no sides, over a river in a remote valley. We talked about this later when we had time to reflect on the wisdom of doing this in two fully loaded Transit vans!



The vans were loaded equally with food and medicine and this time it was requested that our ballast would be firewood rather than pet food.



Firewood is at a premium in Ukraine as the men are all serving in the army and it is considered too dangerous for women and children to collect. The electrical supply is unpredictable and generators are hard to source hence the need for logs.



Jonty proudly mentioned that he had cut the firewood himself from trees local to his home and was very moved when one of the Ukrainian volunteers said ' So you have bought something of yourself here, that you are going to leave behind'. **Not a dry eye in the house!**

Below is a picture of the volunteer drivers with Cris who was coordinating distribution of



the goods into the Donbas region of Eastern Ukraine to families who have stayed behind. Previously Cris was a professional musician and model (working for the same agency as Jonty, John and Bryan)



The warehouse was a few hundred yards from the border where there was a queue of about 25 vehicles and a 90 minute wait to cross. In the last two weeks the local volunteers had watched Russian rockets land from the top floor of the warehouse and the hill behind it.

It's an international effort out there:

Here we are with Quentin from Paris, who is volunteering full time to drive aid over the border.



As mentioned, most of the goods we delivered are going to the Donbas region and in particular to Donetsk. This is one of the delivery vehicles.

Apparently the volunteers who deliver to these areas are in full military protective gear.

Welcome back team - Wow did we smell bad after this trip but felt great!!



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Off the map and turning for home, only 26 hours and 37 minutes to go