Yevhenii Zavhorodnii / Hope and Homes for Children

HOPE NEWS MAGAZINE



WELCOME

Mark Waddington CBE

Chief Executive of Hope and Homes for Children

Dear friends,

'm delighted to welcome you to the first issue of Hope in 2025! Inside you'll find more inspiring stories of our work from all around the world – work that's only possible because of supporters like you.

One of the most striking things about what we do is how it extends far beyond the impact of our initial interventions. Closing an orphanage doesn't just change life for the children inside, it changes it for hundreds of people: parents and relatives who regain family, local children who suddenly have new friends, support services and community facilities that help keep families together and prevent many children from ever going into care in the first place.

Multiply a single orphanage closure by hundreds, and you can see that what we do

doesn't just have the potential to reshape communities. It can reshape entire countries.

But of course, we can't achieve this scale of change alone – we are just the catalyst. That's why we're working tirelessly with other organisations, councils and governments to reshape their systems and eliminate institutionalisation from their practices.

Some of that work is just beginning, some of it has been bringing change for decades – like the achievements of our amazing partners at CCF Moldova, who we're now celebrating 20 years of partnership with. You can read about some of their incredible accomplishments on page 6.

Elsewhere in this issue, you'll also find stories about our work in Ukraine, where our teams have been supporting children as the conflict tears their lives apart. And there's a feature on David Lammy's campaign to end the institutionalisation of children and ensure every child across the globe can grow up in a safe and loving family environment – a campaign we've played a vital role in shaping.

If there's one thing that comes across loud and clear in all this work, it's that our teams and supporters are an amazing force for positive change.

Whether we're reuniting families, keeping them together or creating new ones, we're making life better for children all around the world – and I sincerely hope that you're incredibly proud of everything that your support is making possible.

Thank you for all that you do.





THE POWER OF FAMILY

Our Back to Family campaign is all about working to ensure that every child can grow up in a safe, loving environment. Tatiana Versteac, a trained psychologist who works for our partners CCF Moldova, explains why a family environment is so beneficial for children.

esearch shows that the family is the environment that can best meet a child's developmental needs.

Over the years, Hope and Homes for Children has advocated and promoted the healing power of the family, and set out to alert society to the toxic and traumatising effects of residential care on children. We argue for the need to create family-type services as a healthier solution to protect and nurture children, providing positive benefits that include:

1. The power of belonging

For children who have experienced the trauma of residential care, the return to their families can be a powerful healing experience. The sense of belonging, love and security that a family provides can have a profound positive impact on their psychological wellbeing.

2. A safe haven

A loving family offers a safe and nurturing environment where children can feel secure and loved. This sense of safety can help to reduce stress and anxiety, promoting emotional stability and resilience.

3. Building trust and attachment

Reuniting with their biological family, or a foster care one, allows children to rebuild broken bonds and form secure attachments. This can help them develop a healthy sense of self and trust in others, which are crucial for their emotional and social development.

4 A sense of identity

Family provides a strong sense of identity and belonging for a child starting from the earliest age. Children can learn about their family history, traditions and values, which can help them feel connected to something larger than themselves.

5. Support and guidance

Families can provide ongoing support and guidance as children navigate the challenges of life. This can help them develop coping skills, resilience, and a sense of purpose.

6. A foundation for growth

The healing power of family can lay the foundation for a lifetime of positive growth and development. Children who return to loving families

are more likely to thrive in all areas of their lives, from their education and careers to their relationships and overall wellbeing.

In conclusion

The return to family from residential care can be a transformative experience for children. The healing power of family love, belonging, and support can have a profound positive impact on their psychological wellbeing, helping them to overcome the trauma of the past and build a brighter future.

Yet today there are still millions of children confined in institutions. These children urgently need our help - and I'd like to thank our supporters for enabling teams like mine to continue working to get them **Back to Family**.



ENDING ORPHANAGES

Over the course of the last year, we've been able to close 12 orphanages around the world, getting thousands of children Back to Family.

Romania

losing an orphanage is a complex process that takes time and involves liaising with lots of different agencies. So to close a dozen in a year is a tremendous achievement.

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It feels like we have accomplished something not only for now, but also for the future.



One of the institutions we closed last year was The Mihael Sadoveanu Orphanage in Iași County in Romania. Achieving this closure was a success story two years in the making, as our team in Iași County worked tirelessly with the local authorities to get the children who were trapped there back to family.

Back in 2022, the team signed a cooperation agreement with the local government of Iaşi county that allowed them to enter the orphanage and assess the needs of the children inside. They then began to trace the children's families and relatives, and worked to provide these family members with the support they'd need to bring the children back home.

Because of the team's work, the 40 girls who were forced to live inside the orphanage are now all in safe, supportive home environments – either back with their biological families, living with foster families or in independent living schemes.

And of course our team will continue providing monitoring, counselling and support for all these children and their families at every step of the reintegration process, even as they work to finally close the last remaining orphanages in Romania.

There used to be more than 150,000 children living in orphanages in Romania – thanks to your support and our team's work, that number is now less than 1,000. Soon, together, we will have ended institutionalisation in Romania completely.

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Every closure is different in terms of work and challenges, but the feeling in the end is the same: a great joy and accomplishment.

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Adrian Oros, Hope and Homes for Children Romania

Rwanda

entre St Vincent is located in the bustling urban hub of Musanze, regarded as one of Rwanda's second cities, and provides residential care for children and young people with disabilities.

The institution was established in 2007 by the Catholic Church, but now – as part of the national childcare reform strategy which Hope and Homes staff in Rwanda helped to shape

- Centre St Vincent is in the process of shutting down, and the children inside are instead being moved to family-based care environments.

This reintegration of children into their families and communities aims to place all of Centre St Vincent's residents in loving environments, ensuring they grow up in nurturing homes rather than institutions. By the end of this year, Centre St Vincent will be closed, and the 30 children inside will be Back to Family.

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Through our support, these children can return home, regain their parents' love and care, and access education and medical services while living with their loved ones.

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Case Manager, Hope and Homes for Children Rwanda

Bulgaria

hanks to your ongoing support, after nearly a decade of hard work, our Bulgaria team were finally able to shut down the 'Home for Medical and Social Care for Children' orphanage in Kardjali, South Bulgaria.

Hope and Homes for Children Bulgaria began working to close this orphanage back in 2015. It's a reminder of just how painstaking the work of closing orphanages can be, and the level of dedication and commitment required to see it through to the end.

Now, there are only three institutions left in Bulgaria - and we're going to close them all.



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Successful cases, successful stories, people getting back their hope – this is what brings me joy.

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Dr Liliana Rotaru,

President, Hope and Homes for Children, Moldova

1. How did you come to realise that orphanages are a problem?

Working at university in the mid-90s, my summers were quite free so I was working for the Peace Corps. Then in 2001, I started working for an organisation who were supporting residential institutions. I started wondering, why is this type of support not working? Why, whatever we did, was it not bringing light to children's eyes? And I realised there was such a simple answer: these children were missing their families, that to really be happy and thrive we need connection with human beings. And in a residential institution, there is no connection.

MOLDOVA

Celebrating 20 years of working with CCF in Moldova

This year we're celebrating 20 years of working with our incredible partners Child, Community, Family (CCF) Moldova. So we sat down with Dr Liliana Rotaru, one of the original founders of CCF and now President of the organisation, to have a look back at the past two decades, and see what the future might hold.

2. What are some of your proudest achievements from the past 20 years?

Our team are extremely proud that we managed to close 10 residential institutions. It meant that each and every child from those institutions could to go back to a family environment – to their biological families, to kinship care or family type homes, or to foster families.

We are also very proud that we influenced the policy in Moldova so other institutions have been closed by local authorities and by other organisations, because the framework was there.

In our earliest days we had an idea for crèches, which was inspired by five mothers, and now these crèches are part of the child care system here. They are regulated and local authorities could develop as

many as they need because what we have found out is that this is a wonderful service, offering safe childcare to single mums who can work and provide for their babies, and not face the horrible "choice" between starving and abandoning their babies.

I'm also very proud of our support for local authorities to develop foster care families. We've managed to develop over 400 foster families with our direct support.

And finally, I would say that we've trained professionals in the social and education field, in the medical field, as well as Mayors who have the guardianship authority in a community. We trained almost 40,000 people to improve their practice, to change their attitudes and mindsets and to raise their awareness.



3. What brings you the most joy in your job?

Successful cases, successful stories, happy endings. Hope. People getting back their hope. People getting back their dignity. People getting back control over their lives. This is what brings me lots of joy.

4. What are your main goals over the next couple of years?

We need to solve one of the main bottlenecks of child care reform in Moldova – the 8,662
children supported

insufficiency of well trained and specialist foster care. To do that, we're piloting innovative ways of recruiting, supplementing training and providing additional assistance – but to make it part of the system we need to revise the policy framework and convince the government to approve these and allocate funds. We also want to convince the government to ban the institutionalisation of children. And, of course,



continue our work on helping children transition from residential institutions and helping thousands of families to remain together.

5. What do you think CCF will be doing in 20 years' time?

We hope Moldova will be an orphanage free country and families will be supported to stay together with their children. We want to work ourselves out of our jobs and I will be happy to work in a library!

THE BEAUTY OF FAMILY

M is an extremely talented writer and poet, and is also one of the mothers supported by our colleagues at CCF Moldova. For this issue of Hope, she kindly put pen to paper to talk about what family means to her, and the emotions that motherhood conjures up.

For me, my family means my children – they are the ones who make me feel happy and fulfilled.

Their smiles bring warmth to my soul.

I feel proud when I hear their loving voices calling me "Mom."

They are everything to me, and because of them, I am stronger.

I love seeing them happy; their presence in my life has made me realise that there is nothing more beautiful in this world than being a mother.

M.



Jamilia mea pentru mine imi mai sunt copii, ei sunt celi datorità carora mai sunt copii, ei sunt implinità. Sa sint fericità si aduce caldura cind and Himbetul lor imi aduce cind and suffice spuntud cavintul suffice so pline de inbire spuntud cavintul vocile lor pline de inbire spuntud cavintul vocile lor pline de inbire spuntud envira. I'mama". Ci sunt prutru mine perteriti datorità lor ma face mai fericiti datorità lor ma face sa land sunt ma ma prumo. Ador sa lor in viata minic mai framo. Sa inteleg ca mu-i minic mai framo. Sa inteleg decit sa fii mama.

UKRAINE

News from our international teams

Since the war in Ukraine began, we've helped more than 130,000 people, including 70,000 children, to find safety and support after their lives were thrown into chaos. Liuba's story is just one example of the kinds of support we've been able to provide.

hen our staff first met Liuba* in February 2024, she was in despair.

Her mother had passed away and was left alone to raise her children – Svitlana*, Nikita*, Mark* and Katiia* – without the support of friends or relatives.

Struggling to pay her bills due to debt, Liuba's electricity had been cut off. Her ability to cook for her children and keep them clean, warm and in education were all under severe threat.



Our Ukraine team leader went with Liuba to the regional energy company's office and helped her sort out a debt repayment plan and get her property reconnected with electricity. Liuba then worked with our case manager to find a job, and successfully secured a role as a technologist in a local business.

We helped Liuba to re-register her children with the local doctor and enrol Mark and Katiia in the local kindergarten – and our team also worked to improve the family's living conditions, providing them with food packages and school supplies.

We then connected Liuba with a local charity who were able to help her buy clothes for the children and a multicooker. Svitlana was also able to visit with a psychologist, as she had really struggled since surviving the occupation and losing her grandmother.

But just as Liuba was back on her feet and her children were safe and healthy, a short circuit caused a fire on her property. Children's Services accused Liuba of negligence and told her that they were planning to take her children away and place them in an orphanage.

So we worked with partners from across the local community to keep the family together. Thanks to a local pastor, we were able to get villagers help with clearing up the aftermath of the fire and providing the family with firewood for the winter. Through the local council we were able to secure alternative accommodation for Liuba and her children to stay in while their home was repaired. And after we reached out to the electricity company, they resupplied power to the home and replaced the meter for free.

Liuba's story shows that with the right support, solutions can be found, even in the most desperate situations. Today, Liuba's children are happily living with their mother in their own home, and in a supportive community.

A Ukraine Diary

Towards the end of last year our CEO Mark Waddington visited our amazing teams in Ukraine to understand their progress with our strategy and its impact on children. He's shared some excerpts from his diary during his trip, which reveal some of the incredible work your support is making possible.

31 Thursday

OCTOBER

I met a group of young people in Kyiv who have been through the orphanages here. We ate pizza and talked. I asked them what they wanted us to do, how we could help them. A 15-year-old girl spoke up, angry - she said,

"Parents shouldn't be allowed to sell their children".

It was one of those jaw-dropping moments and you ask yourself, where did that come from? Her story was remarkable. She had been sold into international adoption and the family she was adopted by treated her really poorly. Eventually, they just sent her back, with nothing.

She's with a foster family now. She's well looked after, and you know, for every one moment of inhumanity or cruelty, there are a hundred moments of great kindness, courage and wonderful humanity.

]2 Saturday

NOVEMBER

This morning I watched through the windscreen of our car as smoke from a rocket explosion drifted through the streets of Dnipro city. These attacks are having a grievous impact on children - disrupting their sleep and driving up their anxiety.

Some children are so traumatised they're unable to eat. Many more are unable to properly concentrate, affecting their education. Other problems are arising too, including self-harm and alcohol abuse.

04 Monday

NOVEMBER

I sat and talked with Ludmylla*, whose son Sasha* - he was just 13 - was murdered by Russian soldiers as she tried to flee Mariupol. It was a very emotional conversation. There were lots of tears.

She's incredible, and her daughter too. They adopted a baby boy, in part I think, to honour their own son and brother. It was just a remarkable thing to do. When you've been through that kind of suffering, and you can still find your own humanity and do this... this is why we do what we do. I'm just totally humbled.

06 Wednesday

NOVEMBER

We went to a school in Onipro to see the Miracle Bus. So far our donors have helped us support more than 100,000 children here. Thanks to them, we provide humanitarian aid - food, clothes, trauma counselling. But children need to play too sometimes they just need to be children.

That's what the Miracle Bus is about. And it's bloody epic!

Actors and clowns piling out the back and within seconds the place is full of games and colour, and happy kids.

The joy on those children's faces stays with me on the six hour drive back to Kyiv. Their smiles and laughter are a powerful reminder of the incredible impact our work is having here.

08 Frida

NOVEMBER

It's my last day here and the war has come to remind me of the dangers our incredible teams face every day. I can hear drones in the air above the hotel and distant explosions as they either hit the ground or get shot down - not sure which. They sound like giant lawnmowers in the sky. I have recorded some of it on my phone.

We must keep doing everything we can for the children and families here - and our amazing teams too! They're all such extraordinary people. They've been through such horrendous things but they're so full of life and laughter, and they're all so furiously focused on helping others. I feel so honoured to know them, to have them as colleagues. And friends.

Making Miracles

The Miracle Bus is just one of the ways your support is delivering joy, respite and healing to traumatised children across Ukraine.



herever it occurs, war has a devastating impact on children. It puts childhood on hold, stealing innocence and causing grave and lasting damage and trauma.

Our brave workers on the ground tell us that some of the children they see are so traumatised they are frozen with fear. Many are grieving unimaginable loss. Their personalities have virtually shut down. Some are even unable to eat, which is impacting their nutritional health.

Therapy on four wheels

To support children affected by the war in Ukraine, we've joined a joint EU project along with Save the Children to help young people get back what should be a basic right for any child – the right to play.

Into stark and challenging settings, over crumbling roads and into hard-to-reach villages, there now arrives a mobile miracle. A moving story of hope and healing. A bountiful bus fuelled by your kindness, and packed with play, props, performance and participation: the Miracle Bus.

The healing power of play and creativity

Studies have shown that for children traumatised by violence and fear, the humble delight and innocence of playtime has transformative power.

It offers a joyous and safe space to be a child again. To play. To imagine normality. To express and explore – even in non-verbal ways, deeply held emotions. To heal in the moment. And over time.

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It's like the Mystery Van from Scooby-Doo - the actors jumped out and within seconds you've got 40 or 50 happy kids screaming and laughing. It's a riot of games and play and safety. And behind that joy and laughter is an even deeper power. The idea that they can forget that there's a war. That childhoods held hostage can be freed again. That joy and creativity can heal! The Miracle Bus really is just that. It's a miracle. Your miracle.

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Mark Waddington, CEO Hope and Homes for Children

RWANDA

Mwiza's Story

Our Teen Mother Project in Rwanda makes sure young people like Mwiza* get the support they need.

Amidst all this emotional

wiza's life is a testament to strength in adversity. When her parents separated, she and her sister were sent to live with their grandparents. But the grandparents physically and verbally abused them, blaming the two girls for the family's troubles. As the oldest, Mwiza took the brunt of the abuse.

For the first time in a long while, I felt a glimmer of hope.

turmoil, Mwiza met a boy who she thought cared for her. But when she fell pregnant by him, the boy disappeared, leaving Mwiza facing a heartbreaking decision. Fearing further violence from her grandparents, and wanting to do what was best for her sister, Mwiza fled to Kigali.

Five months pregnant and living alone in Rwanda's capital, Mwiza found a job as a house worker. But she was isolated and lonely, so she reached out to her father. Happily, he was delighted to hear from her, and he pledged to support her through the challenging times ahead.

Even so, Mwiza was struggling with the trauma she'd been through, and daunted by what lay ahead of her. She suffered from depression and was forced to leave school. When her child was born she didn't even have clothes for her daughter to wear.

Your support was like a lifeline.

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Soon after her she'd given birth, a community volunteer put us in touch with Mwiza and we began to provide her with support. The initial assistance we gave her meant that she could provide herself and her daughter with the essentials they needed. And having that reassurance reignited a spark within her: "For the first time in a long while, I felt a glimmer of hope" she told us.

As part of our Teen Mother Project, we helped Mwiza attend group therapy with other young mothers. She discovered a community of understanding. Realising she wasn't alone in her experiences rekindled her self-belief.

Determined to provide for her family and get her life back on track, Mwiza took a tailoring course which gave her back her pride and purpose. Today Mwiza is reunited with her sister and working as a professional tailor, providing for her loved ones and giving her child the love and support that she'd yearned for when she was younger. "My dreams are now within reach, and my daughter will know the love I missed," she expresses, beautifully.

Your support helps mothers like Mwiza.Maniragena Olivier / Hope and Homes for Children

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ADVOCACY

Making care reform a global priority



Foreign Secretary David Lammy's recent launch of the first ever global campaign on care reform for children is fantastic news for our cause.

Every child deserves a loving and safe family environment where they can thrive and get the best start in life. Too many children are facing a life of neglect and abuse in harmful institutions such as orphanages, which do not have children's best interest at heart.

David Lammy. UK Foreign Secretary.

n January, David Lammy travelled to Bulgaria with the Hollywood actor Barry Keoghan to announce the launch of a campaign that will push for every child around the world to have the right to grow up in a safe and loving family environment.

As part of the campaign, the UK will lead a new global alliance to advocate for sustainable, lasting reform of children's social care around the world.

Six countries across four continents have already signed up to this alliance and are committed to driving forward progress on this issue, and we already work in four of them: Bulgaria, Ukraine, Moldova and Rwanda (the other two countries signed up so far are Paraguay and the Philippines).

And not only did the Foreign Secretary announce the launch of this new campaign, he also announced plans for a new Global Charter which will work with governments around the world to end the use of children's institutions.

Having the UK Government's commitment to issues that we feel so passionately about is hugely welcome, and will hopefully provide a big boost to our work in the countries

signed up to the alliance. It's incredibly heartening for us to see the cause that we have championed for so long getting the recognition it deserves, and we're glad that the need for urgent action has been acknowledged by the Government.

Every day millions of the most vulnerable children face trafficking, abuse, and neglect as a result of being confined to orphanages and institutions, but the government's announcement offers real hope for ending this global scandal. Everyone here at Hope and Homes for Children believes this campaign has the potential to secure the political and financial backing needed to make orphanages history – and we'll of course keep you updated with how it is progressing in future issues of Hope!

We are delighted to see the UK Foreign Secretary turn his personal passion into political action with the launch of the first-ever global campaign on care reform for children.

Mark Waddington, CEO Hope and Homes for Children

SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

Alison and Richard Netherclift, **Vale of Pewsey Support Group**

lison and Richard Netherclift from our Vale of **Pewsey Support** Group have been organising concerts to raise funds for us for over 25 years. They tell us how their relationship with Hope and Homes for Children began, and what they've learned over their years of fundraising.

People have to enjoy coming to whatever you are putting on.

It all started when we saw a performance by opera singers in the local church. A good friend and myself were on the PTA at our children's primary school and used to organise fundraising events. My friend Caz told me some neighbours of hers had recently started a children's charity, and mentioned that perhaps we could hold a fundraising event for them. That was in 1999, and those neighbours were Mark and Caroline Cook!

We spent several year putting on summer concerts, along with the occasional ball with a sit down meal and live band, then in 2010 we held our first

We have learnt that publicity is so important, particularly for big events. If people don't know something is happening, they won't come! And of course the more publicity is out there, the more people hear and see about the charity. Don't be greedy with ticket prices - and try to have a few collection buckets, as if people have enjoyed your event, they will pop some money into the buckets when they leave. And of course, always send people home with a Hope Magazine in their hand!



SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

Dana Jamieson, London Marathon

Dana Jamieson is braving early starts and cold winter mornings as she trains to run this year's London Marathon in support of our work. We caught up with Dana to find out what inspired her to run for our cause and how her training has been going.

really wanted to find a charity which focused on the well-being of children. I hadn't fully appreciated that orphanages were such harmful places and that children in them were exposed to such huge risks. I also didn't realise that so many children in them weren't actually orphans.

My mother-in-law was a nurse and actually used to transport children from orphanages in Croatia to the UK to spend time with foster families. Her eves still light up when we talk about this. I like to think that I am continuing to help these efforts in my own small way and feel connected to the amazing work you do. I felt that our values really aligned, and that I could 100% get behind supporting you.

I've never run a marathon before – only a couple of half marathons - so I'll be delighted if I can actually run this distance! It's still early in my journey but I know crossing the finish line

knowing I've put my heart and soul into fundraising will be my most rewarding moment!

And as a mother of two teen

girls. I know how important

a loving a nurturing family

is. To me, family is home - a

place where you are safe and

feel you belong. That's what

all children.

we should be striving to give to

So far the biggest challenge I've faced is that even your close friends won't really engage with your journey until the event is imminent. This is understandable as people think they've got lots of time to support you, but obviously it helps to keep you motivated if you can get earlier donations! Don't be disheartened though, deliver a consistent message and they will come!

I'm so passionate about this cause because I was adopted at birth and was lucky enough to be adopted into a loving family.

Family is home, the place where you are safe and feel you belong.

If you'd like to sponsor Dana to take on her challenge and help our work, you can scan this QR code or use the address go.hopeandhomes.org/dana-jamieson





Like trips to the dentist and going to the gym, writing a Will is one of those essential things that we know we should do but often put off.

But it's much easier to write a Will than people think, and it's now possible to write one for a very low cost (in some cases you can even do it for free). To find out more, you can contact a local solicitor - and there's also plenty of information available online.

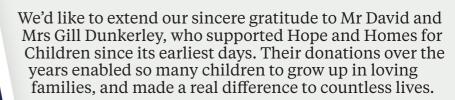
Of course, understandably when you do write your Will (if you haven't already) family and friends will often come first, but a gift in your Will is also a great way to support the causes you're passionate about.

Every gift, large or small, makes an enormous difference to our work, and has the power to give a child the gift of a happy childhood.

A gift to us in your Will can help change children's lives long into the future, because it will help us plan for the years ahead – knowing your support is there lets us be certain our support can be there too.

If you would like to know more about leaving a legacy to support separated children, or have any other questions for us, please do contact angela.lathwell@ hopeandhomes.org

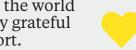
A LEGACY OF HOPE



We'd also like to extend our heartfelt thanks for the caring, thoughtful gift David and Gill made in their Will, so that their support could keep helping our cause in years to come.

bring separated children all around the world Back to Family, and we're incredibly grateful for this wonderful gesture of support.









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What's on in 2025



If you'd like to get more involved in supporting our work this year, there's a whole host of brilliant fundraising activities coming up in the months ahead.

To find out more about these events, or if you would like to hold an event of your own, visit go.hopeandhomes.org/WhatsOn or email us at fundraising@hopeandhomes.org

FUNDRAISING CHALLENGES[†]

2025

April

Brighton Marathon, Brighton

London Landmarks Half Marathon,

London

June -September **10,000ft Skydive**, Salisbury (various dates available)

September

Swim Serpentine - 1 mile, London

October

Royal Parks Half Marathon, London

Santa in the City Run, London

[†] Entry fees and fundraising targets vary for each challenge.



And don't forget to save the date for our Christmas Concert in London - Tuesday 2nd December.

^{*} To ensure the safety and privacy of the people we support, the names of the children, relatives and carers featured in this publication have been changed.