Our vision is a world in which children no longer suffer institutional care

Cover: Thanks to you, Uwera has a family to love and protect her. Read her story inside.
FAMILIES. NOT ORPHANAGES.

Orphanages do not protect children. They harm them. Which is why we are working towards a day where every child can grow up in a loving family.

Hope and Homes for Children is a global expert in the field of deinstitutionalisation – supporting children into loving families and preventing family breakdown. With your support we are building a global movement that will eradicate orphanages in our lifetime.

Our mission
To be the catalyst for the global eradication of institutional care of children.

Our vision
A world in which children no longer suffer institutional care.

NEWS UPDATES

- We launched the second phase of Opening Doors for Europe’s Children, our pan-European campaign, in partnership with Eurochild. The campaign to strengthen families and institutionisation and promote family and community-based care for children across the Continent has expanded its reach from 12 to 15 countries.

- In February, our Impact Report demonstrated the life-saving difference that your support is making to the lives of children and families around the world.

- The Ukrainian Government has formally recognised our Family Support Centres as an official part of the country’s social service system. The Centres provide pre-school day care, mother and baby units and emergency reception centres to offer short-term care for children whose families are in crisis. In addition, the Centres ensure that social workers have the training they need to help children from orphanages return to their families or join safe, loving foster families. The Government’s endorsement means the Centres can be replicated across Ukraine making improved family support available country-wide.

- In Bulgaria we won a clear commitment from the Government to close all baby institutions by 2020. There is an Action Plan in place that, if implemented, will lead to the eradication of Bulgaria’s last 46 orphanages in the next four years.

- In June, Richard Greenhalgh will step into his new role as Chair of Trustees, leading the Board in scrutinising the organisation’s work and ensuring we remain focused on our strategy, values and commitment to children. Richard’s career has been spent mostly with Unilever, most recently as the Executive Chairman of Unilever UK. He has served as chair of several charities including Care International, one of the biggest international development charities. You will be able to read more about Richard in the next issue of Hope.

- Our Rwanda team had a landmark month in December, closing four institutions and moving 272 vulnerable children into family homes and transitioning young adults into independent living.

- In October, Chief Executive Mark Waddington launched the Latin America and Caribbean Centre of Excellence. The online training and information hub will equip professionals and volunteers in the region with skills and expertise in deinstitutionalisation.

Save the date! BBC executives have selected Hope and Homes for Children for the weekly Radio 4 appeal on Sunday October 1st. The appeal is an opportunity to spread the word about our mission to be the catalyst for the eradication of institutional care and raise money to support our work. Last year the Radio 4 appeal raised over £640,000 for charities and in 2010 our appeal with Kate Adie raised in excess of £40,000. More details to follow.

To ensure the safety and privacy of our beneficiaries, all the names of the children, relatives and carers featured in this publication have been changed.
THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

In March 1999, Hope and Homes for Children closed its first orphanage, a baby facility in Romania; this year it will close its one hundredth institution. Of course this event marks an important milestone on our journey towards a world in which children no longer suffer institutional care, but the number itself is largely symbolic. In reality, each of those one hundred closures acts as a powerful catalyst for child protection reform on a much wider scale.

I like to think about orphanage closures in terms of the butterfly effect; the idea that small changes can lead to much larger ones, that a butterfly flapping its wings on one continent might eventually result in a hurricane on another. What Hope and Homes for Children works to achieve is not just the closure of single institutions. Our goal is to be the catalyst for a fundamental shift away from systems that rely on abusive institutions to systems which respect children as individuals and offer those children the love and protection of a family.

The closure of institutions is the essential first step in the reform process because as long as you have institutions, you will have an alternative care system that ignores children’s rights. The closure of an institution creates an incentive for reform and begins the process of replacing a reactive system with a proactive system. In a proactive system, the moment of crisis, when a child is at risk of being separated from their family, becomes the moment of opportunity when children and families are supported to stay together.

This approach helps all those who work in the child protection system to think about what is best for each individual child and to intervene in a timely way before the evil has been done. Because once a child is torn apart from their family and placed in an institution, the evil is already done. The statistics show that once a child enters an orphanage, he or she stays there for an average of eight years. If you can avoid that situation, your intervention might only last for one or two years but it will give that child a much better chance of becoming an independent adult, a fully functioning member of society, in the future.

The other major change that our closure programmes bring about is to stop child protection systems from focusing solely on children in isolation. We show why it is important to consider the child and the parents. Children and their families are two pieces of the same jigsaw and by thinking about the child in the context of their family, children can be protected without the use of institutions.

The training and technical assistance that we provide during a closure programme also creates a powerful ripple effect. We retrain staff from the institution to work within the reformed child-protection system. We train foster parents to care for children who cannot return to their birth families. We help to train and support social workers, psychologists and case managers in order to build the capacity of social services in the area to support families and protect children without resorting to orphanages.

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Our work in Romania shows that by closing orphanages in this way, we can create a domino effect. It takes time but the tipping point in Romania came once we had provided the proof. By successfully closing institutions and showing that there was a better way to protect children, a way that created far better outcomes for everyone, we were able to build confidence and be the catalyst for much wider reform.

In Romania, we are now just a few years away from seeing the very last orphanage close. It’s not a question of if, but when. The fact that it’s possible in Romania is going to make other countries want to do the same because it’s inspiring to see that this kind of turnaround is possible. The challenge for Hope and Homes for Children now is to keep up the momentum, but I do believe that, by the end of my lifetime, we will be living in a world where institutions for children will exist only in the history books.

STEFAN DARABUS IS REGIONAL OPERATIONS DIRECTOR FOR HOPE AND HOMES FOR CHILDREN IN CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN EUROPE

In reality, each of those one hundred closures acts as a powerful catalyst for child protection reform on a much wider scale.
In 1998, our founders, Mark and Caroline Cook travelled to the mining town of Cavnic in Romania to investigate rumours that abandoned babies were being kept in terrible conditions on the top floor of the hospital there. A young man called Stefan Darabus agreed to be their interpreter. (Stefan would go on to lead our work in Romania and today he is our Regional Operations Director for Central and Southern Europe). When the group arrived in Cavnic, they discovered 86 babies and very young children, surviving without love or care in absolute squalor.

“The Director opened a door and we were hit by the stench of urine and faeces”, Mark and Caroline recall. “Inside fifteen babies lying in cots were covered in their own excrement. No sound came from them. There was complete silence. They had already learnt at their tender age that even if they cried, no one came”.

Hope and Homes for Children set to work to raise funds to buy six houses where the children could be cared for in an atmosphere that felt as close as possible to a family home. These were our first group homes and shortly after they opened in 1999, Cavnic became our first institution closure.

Viorel was one of the children who left the orphanage to begin a new life. Born with learning difficulties, he had spent his earliest years confined to a cot with no one to love him, comfort him or encourage his development. He was four years old by the time he left the institution but he couldn’t feed himself, dress himself or use a toilet because no one had taken the time to teach him even these basic skills. The love and care that Viorel has experienced over the last 18 years have given him the chance to enjoy life and to achieve his true potential.

“My name is Viorel and I am 22 years old. I live in Cavnic in Romania in a house I share with my friends and our carers. My best friend is called Daniel and we go to school together. When I was little, my carers helped me to learn how to do things for myself - how to eat and how to wash and get dressed. Today, I like helping around the house. I set the table, tidy my room and help in the garden. I love listening to music and anything to do with cars. One of my favourite things is the Winter Games that Hope and Homes for Children organize on the ski slope in Cavnic every January. I always take part and this year I won a medal”.

When Hope and Homes for Children began work in Romania in 1998 there were 100,000 children living in orphanages and other institutions. Today, that figure has fallen to 8,000.

“Then, no one believed there was an alternative to children’s institutions”, Stefan Darabus remembers. “They thought that we were hopeless idealists. But today, the end is in sight. There is still a lot of work to do, but I am confident that we will see the last Romanian orphanage close within the next five to seven years”. 
MODERN DAY SUPERHEROES

OTTO SESTAK IS HEAD OF LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT FOR HOPE AND HOMES FOR CHILDREN.

Welcoming a new child into your life is always a challenge, whether you are a biological parent or a foster carer, because all children are beautiful human beings with unique personalities from the day that they are born.

But I believe that foster parents should be recognised as modern day superheroes. These are people who knowingly, willingly step up to the challenge of taking a child who is likely to come with huge baggage of suffering and guide them towards normality.

Although the priority for Hope and Homes for Children is always to try to reunite children from orphanages with their birth parents or wider biological family, it’s important to recognise that for some children this is not a safe option. For these children, foster care may be the best way for them to grow up in a family environment where they can experience the love and affection they need to flourish and grow.

That’s why foster care is an important part of the mix of high-quality, alternative care services that we help to develop in order to end the “one-size-fits-all” solution of orphanages. By establishing good foster care networks at the same time as closing institutions we are better able to meet the individual needs of each and every child.

Foster care has been part of our model ever since we first began to close orphanages and we have succeeded in introducing this option for children in places where we were told it would be impossible. In much of Eastern Europe for example, in the wake of Soviet rule, institutions were the norm and fostering much of Eastern Europe for example, in the wake of places where we were told it would be impossible. In

We also make sure that the whole process of placing children with foster families is very structured and controlled. The professionals that we train help children and families to plan and navigate the different stages, beginning with the first meeting. They are on hand to help with the inevitable difficulties that will come as children and foster families get used to living together. And we insist on thorough post-placement monitoring before she was fostered by Jane and her family.

Gihozo spent her earliest years in a Rwandan orphanage before she was fostered by Jane and her family.

for a minimum of three months which can be extended as necessary until everyone is confident that the placement is working successfully.

Sometimes, we find that introducing foster care opens a door into a system that is resistant to reform. For example, in 2016, Hope and Homes for Children began a programme to prepare child care professionals to recruit and train foster parents in Tabasco State in Mexico. This acted as a first step for those taking part in understanding the harm caused by orphanages and gave us the chance to demonstrate that there is a better way to protect children.

Hope and Homes for Children also plays an important role in advocating for the development of high-quality foster care around the world.

Many people in this part of the world still find it really hard to understand why anyone would take responsibility for a child who was not related to them and make them a part of their family. Aren’t they just doing it for the money, they ask? But we are confident that with robust selection and training processes, it’s possible to weed out anyone who is not right for the role. And although the payment that foster carers receive differs from country to country, it is never more than a token amount to cover some of the expense of having another child in the family and so money is not the reason.

It’s also important to recognise that there is a strong professional element to the role of a foster carer - there is a job description, a training programme and a standard of minimum care. This encourages the right people to come forward who can cope in the extremely tough situations in which they are likely to find themselves, working with children who have had a very difficult start in life.

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For Hope and Homes for Children is to develop services, rather than to provide them, and so we work in partnership with the authorities and other organisations in every country where we operate or have influence, in order to establish high-quality foster care services for vulnerable children.

With your support, we can do even more to ensure that high-quality foster care becomes a viable alternative for the millions of children who are still in institutions around the world. Extra resources are needed to extend emergency foster care services and to make sure that existing foster parents continue to be well trained, supported and monitored so that the service they offer to children is the best that it can be.

Foster carers take on the task of showing children what it’s like to live in a family and experience affection, love and attention. Their contribution is to turn an abandoned child, someone who was seen as a lost cause by an orphanage, into a beautifully functioning human being.

To me, those who choose to embark on this hard journey and who succeed so admirably are wonderful, brave and courageous people and they deserve our support.
MARIA’S STORY

Our foster carers play an essential role in helping Hope and Homes for Children to close orphanages and find the right alternative, family-based care for individual children.

Maria lives in Chisinau, the capital of Moldova. She was one of the first foster carers that we trained when we started work there in 2001. So far Maria has helped eight children to make the transition from living in an institution to life in a permanent family. This is her story.

At the moment, I am looking after Vasile who is six, his sister Veronica who is four and their baby brother Nicolae who is just over a year old. It’s lovely to see them having fun together because this is a new experience for them. When they lived in the orphanage, they were separated according to age and never saw each other. I agreed to take all three children because I think brothers and sisters should grow-up together.

It was my husband who first suggested that we should foster children from an institution until they could be reunited with their birth families or adopted. It was something we did together. Sadly, he died three years ago but I have two grown-up daughters of my own who are very supportive. They love the children too and so I have been able to carry on.

I love to garden and to make things by hand. I teach all the children who come to me to draw and paint and to make things themselves. I decorated the children’s bedroom myself and made all the curtains and cushions. I wanted it to be bright and friendly - somewhere they could feel was their own. In the orphanage, the children slept in dormitories where every bed was exactly the same as the next and they had no personal possessions, no toys or keep-sakes, of their own.

Caring for children who have spent time in institutions can be very challenging. When Vasile first came to live with me he was anxious and withdrawn. He was scared that he would be taken back to the institution and desperate for my attention. He could be jealous and aggressive. I try to give the children as much affection and praise as possible. They have been with me for two years now and they are far happier and more settled than before. Vasile is coping much better at nursery too and learning to avoid conflict. He joins in well and likes taking part in plays. He always wants the lead role!

Veronica is a friendly, kind and sociable little girl. When she first came to live with me, she was very timid and frail. Her balance was poor and she would often fall over. In the orphanage, the younger children spend long hours in their cots and they rarely go outside. Today, she is far more active and confident. She likes to run and jump and at nursery she enjoys dancing, singing and reciting poems.

Nicolae entered the institution as a new born baby and so he was denied the individual care and attention that he needed during that crucial first year of his life. When I first brought him home he cried a great deal and would not let me leave him for more than a few moments. He showed no interest in his surroundings or other people. Today, Nicolae is the heart of this family! He smiles and laughs a lot and everybody loves him. He is quite happy to be left for short periods and he loves to try to repeat the words that Vasile and Veronica try to teach him.

Sadly, there is no longer any prospect of Vasile, Veronica and Nicolae being reunited with their birth mother due to her ongoing mental health issues. The children will stay here with me unless or until Hope and Homes for Children and CCF Moldova can find the right family to adopt all three and give them a permanent loving home where they can grow up together.

It is hard when the children I foster move on but it’s worth it. I know that the time they spend with me will help them to overcome their difficult start in life and to accept the life long love and care they all need to grow and develop as they should.

WHEN THEY LIVED IN THE ORPHANAGE, THEY WERE SEPARATED ACCORDING TO AGE AND NEVER SAW EACH OTHER. I AGREED TO TAKE ALL THREE CHILDREN BECAUSE I THINK BROTHERS AND SISTERS SHOULD GROW-UP TOGETHER.
THE ILLUSION OF PROTECTION

HALYA POSTOLIUK IS REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

In terms of the attitude towards children and the understanding of their needs, little has changed in Ukraine’s Child Protection system since Soviet times. There have been some fragmented improvements but governments have failed to lay the foundations necessary to prevent family breakdown and ensure an integrated approach to protecting children’s rights.

Institutional care remains the most common response by the authorities to children whose families are struggling to care for them, largely because of poverty and disability. Despite the evidence of countless international studies, which confirm that institutional care causes irreparable damage to children’s development, the growing number of press releases, media reports of abuse, violence and worsening of residential facilities, despite the stories about the difficulties faced by young people when they leave institutions, no decisive action has been taken to address the situation.

Hope and Homes for Children recently completed the first comprehensive audit of Ukraine’s child protection system in order to understand how and why children are sent to institutions, the conditions they experience and the effect that institutionalization has on their development and their life-chances.

The findings of the audit are stark.

The size of the institutional network is overwhelming — its total area reaches 48.6km². In other words, the institutional care network in Ukraine is the size of a city, a city that exists in isolation from the rest of society, obeying its own rules, its own routines. It is a “territory” inhabited by almost 100,000 children and society, obeying its own rules, its own routines. It is a city, a city that exists in isolation from the rest of society, obeying its own rules, its own routines.

The daily routine in almost all institutions we surveyed follows a strict schedule. This means that children have almost no free time for themselves. Their days are taken up performing standard tasks that are assigned by staff, with no regard for the children’s individual needs and preferences.

The National Audit of the Child Protection system was supported with significant pro-bono hours and funding from the law firm, Clifford Chance.

The findings of the audit were officially published in Kiev in December at an event we co-organised with the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman, who was at the event, commented:

“...and their life-chances. conditions they experience and the effect that the first comprehensive audit of Ukraine’s child protection network in Ukraine is the size of a small city...”
Maxim’s Story

Maxim is 16 years old and has spent most of his life trapped in Ukraine’s vast and loveless network of children’s institutions.

Maxim’s mother couldn’t cope with raising her children in poverty and so, when he was three, he was sent to live in an orphanage.

Life there was especially tough for Maxim who had been born with an eye disorder. The other children teased him and he responded with his fists. The only support this lonely little boy had was his older sister, Anya, who has been sent to live in the same institution.

Soon, Maxim had a reputation as a troublemaker and so he was deliberately misdiagnosed as having a “mild mental retardation”. This gave the authorities the excuse they needed to send him to a specialist boarding school, in a remote area some 100 kilometres away. No one asked Maxim if he wanted to go; he wasn’t even allowed to say goodbye to Anya.

At first Maxim was defiant – he cried, begged to see his sister; he refused to eat or speak but eventually, he was forced to come to terms with his situation and make the best of things.

After eight years Maxim was transferred to another specialist institution, in yet another part of the country. Again, no one warned him about the move, explained the reason for the decision or allowed him to say goodbye to his friends.

Throughout his childhood, Maxim suffered repeated ear infections. He tried to tell the staff in the institutions about the pain but they ignored him and so he stopped complaining. As a result, he almost lost his hearing.

In all, Maxim spent 13 years surviving in a system where no one cared for him as an individual, where no one cared for him at all.

When Hope and Homes for Children began work to close the last facility where Maxim lived, we had to fight hard to guarantee him a better future. Because of his age and his false diagnosis, the authorities wanted to send him on down the line to an adult institution. Maxim was at risk of spending his entire life, trapped in the system, and we were determined not to let that happen.

Instead, we made sure that Maxim was able to move to one of our Small Group Homes. These are houses tailored to meet the needs of children from orphanages who cannot be reunited with their birth families or matched with foster parents. Often, this is because of their age or because they have special needs.

So today Maxim lives in an ordinary domestic house, in a residential part of town where he is part of the local community. He shares his new home with a small group of other children and adult carers. For the first time in his life, he has his own space, his own clothes and his own possessions. None of these things were allowed in the institutions.

Maxim has already had two operations to correct the problems with his eye and his ears and he is preparing for a third. His dream to no longer feel ashamed of his face will finally come true. Maxim has also had his false diagnosis overturned so now he can attend a mainstream school. His ambition is to design and make shoes.

Most importantly of all, we have managed to reunite Maxim with Anya. So, last year, he spent Christmas in his own home, where he is cared for and respected as an individual, with a sister to love him.
In January, Sarah Whiting, Director of Fundraising for Hope and Homes for Children, visited our work in Rwanda. This is her personal account of meeting one of the many families that we help to support there:

We met Atete and Uwera just outside Kigali, the Rwandan capital. Clinging to the side of a hill, their house is surrounded by a clay yard with banana plants and roaming goats. Here Atete shared her story of how she became Uwera’s “mother”. One Friday evening five years ago, Atete was returning home when she heard cries from the trees just beyond her yard. There on the ground lay Uwera, a newborn baby, abandoned and naked apart from a tiny cloth around her waist. Atete scooped her up and took her home, where she kept her for three weeks while the local community searched in vain for her parents. During this time, Atete, her husband and their own children bonded with Uwera. So much so that they say they grew desperate to keep her. This is relatively common in Rwandan culture, where abandoned children are often taken in by local families. The local authorities, however, pressed for Uwera be placed in an orphanage. Atete fought to keep her new daughter, but in vain.

Resigned to giving her up, Atete did everything she could to make sure Uwera had whatever she needed before entering the orphanage. She bought baby bottles for the little girl, made sure she had her vaccinations and registered her birth. All this cost Atete much more than she had, but, she told us, it was the only way in which she could help. Atete and her own children often visited the orphanage. But Atete was then asked to become a ‘Godmother’ which meant she faced extra charges simply to see Uwera; something which, to her, seemed to go against any sense of what’s fair for a mother. After a year Uwera was transferred to another orphanage over 80 kilometers away. Atete didn’t realise this for months and no one would tell her where she’d been moved to. It wasn’t until she was three-years-old that Uwera was finally returned. By that time, she’d spent three years in institutional care. Our colleague, Claudine, explained what the conditions were like in the orphanage. She said she had rarely seen such a terrible place. There were over 50 children in the institution, and they were all kept in the same room, every day, in silence. At night they slept on the floor with insects crawling over them. They were left in their cloth nappies for up to three days before being changed. And there was only one meal each day at 3pm. By three and a half, Uwera was the size of a two-year-old and still couldn’t walk or talk. Eighteen months ago, following an overhaul of the country’s institutions, we began working with the local government to close the orphanage. This is how we discovered Atete and her link to Uwera. Our social workers carried out the necessary checks and were happy to recommend that Uwera should return home to Atete and supported the whole family through the process. When we visited them at home, Uwera looked out from behind her mother’s legs – a beautiful little girl, with bright, wide eyes.
Atete told us that when she first got Uwera back she felt like she was carrying a dead body. She was so thin from malnutrition and her throat so tiny that water pooled between her collar bones as she was bathed. By slowly feeding her, Atete gradually built her back up. But Uwera’s development has clearly been delayed - she is very small for her age and has still not fully recovered from the infections she developed through wearing soiled cloth nappies for long periods of time. Her mother told us that she is still terrified if anyone speaks to her in an angry tone. As a result, when Uwera does something wrong, her mother has to respond calmly and quietly.

But now Uwera can walk and talk. She smiles endlessly and clamped to her mother’s legs. She has started to wander beyond the fence in the yard and has a couple of friends in the village. Atete is now focussed on preparing Uwera for her next big step: nursery. When we met Atete’s other children, her eldest daughter told us, “Uwera is the darling of the family.” This big sister played a significant role in keeping in contact with Uwera. As she was a child, the orphanage staff didn’t mind her visiting as much as they did Atete and so she enjoyed better access. Because of this, she’s known as Uwera’s second mother.

Atete spoke passionately about the need for children to grow up in families and be loved. She said she was now full of hope since the Rwandan government’s strategy of placing abandoned children in institutions ended. Instead, new services have been developed such as emergency foster care. Atete finished by saying that Uwera is no longer frightened by adults. She is safe and she is loved, and to Atete she is a gift from God. As we left, it dawned on us that this very special lady has saved her daughter twice. And I’m convinced that Uwera will have a loving family for the rest of her life.

This is what supporting Hope and Homes for Children means on an individual level. But the charity has also played a lead role in ending the institutional care of children nationally. Rwanda will soon be free of institutions for children. With this evidence of our success at country level, we’re working worldwide to champion families for children over orphanages.

None of this would be possible without the generosity of our supporters. Very few people are able to witness first-hand the transformation that I saw in Rwanda, but it is only because of your continued and committed support that this change is even possible. Your help, in whatever way and at whatever level you are able to give it, is absolutely critical to ensuring that Atete and inspirational people like her have the chance to care for children.

I ask that, in whatever way you support us and for whatever reason, you share your commitment to Hope and Homes for Children with others and continue to do so until we succeed in eradicating the institutional care of children.

Today, Atete and Uwera are together. You helped to make this possible. Thank you.
DONATE YOUR SPECIAL DAY AND HELP US TO MAKE SURE THAT EVERY CHILD IS CELEBRATED

One of the small but heart breaking differences about growing up in an orphanage instead of a family, is that children who live in institutions rarely get the chance to celebrate their birthdays. If children are abandoned as babies, they may not even know their actual date of birth. Even institutions that do arrange birthday celebrations miss the point.

One orphanage director in Bosnia and Herzegovina proudly told us that if a number of children had birthdays in the same month, she would arrange a joint party one weekend in order to make the process more efficient. But of course that’s not what birthdays are about.

That’s why we are asking if you would be willing to consider pledging your birthday or any other special occasion to Hope and Homes for Children so that we can close institutions and give children the chance to grow up in families where they are loved and celebrated as individuals.

It’s easy to do. Just complete the enclosed form to pledge your celebration or visit www.hopeandhomes.org/pledgeyourbirthday. Be sure to share that pledge so that others know what you have in mind.

Nearer to your birthday or other special date, we’ll remind you to start a fundraising page where you ask your friends and family to donate the money they were planning to spend on your presents or a party to Hope and Homes for Children.

We will use all the money you raise to make sure that children have the chance to celebrate their birthdays, surrounded by people who love them. And afterwards we will send you a Story of Hope to share with your supporters by way of a thank you.

SVETLANA’S FIRST BIRTHDAY

Svetlana celebrated her first birthday when she was 13 years old. Until then, she had spent her childhood, trapped in the Ukrainian orphanage system, cut off from the world, with no sense that she mattered or that anybody cared for her.

We helped Svetlana to leave institutional care and move to one of our Small Family Homes. Here she was able to try lots of new things for the first time like making a cup of tea, walking in the fresh air and going to a mainstream school. And for the first time on her birthday, Svetlana blew out the candles on her cake, made a wish and opened cards and presents from her friends.

“Before I left the institution, I couldn’t even dream about a birthday party”, she said. “I didn’t even know how people celebrated birthdays. Today I have a beautiful dress on, a real cake and people I love here with me. From now on this will be my new tradition.”

Please pledge your birthday or other special occasion to Hope and Homes for Children and give children everywhere the chance to grow up knowing that they are loved.
GET INVOLVED

JUNE

Dinner and Address by Professor Alexander McCall Smith
Friday 9 June, 7pm
New Club, 86 Princes Street, Edinburgh EH2 2BB
Join supporters new and old for a dinner and address by best selling author, Alexander McCall Smith. Tickets, £50 per person. For more information and to book, email Leonie at leonie.macaulay@hopeandhomes.org

JULY

Pete Allen Jazz Night
Saturday 22 July, 6pm
Winterbourne Dauntsey
The South Wiltshire Support Group presents an evening with the legendary jazz artist Pete Allen. This event is always a sell out so book early. Tickets, £20 per person. For more information and to book, email Kirsty Dudin at kirstydudin@btinternet.com

SEPTEMBER

Chieveley Beer & Cider Festival
Saturday 2 September, 6pm
Recreational Ground, Chieveley (nr Newbury)
Join our Newbury Area Support Group to enjoy fantastic ales, ciders, great food and live music. Tickets, £10 per person. For more information and to book, email Kirsty Heath at Kirstyheath@me.com

Bridge Drive
Friday 29 September, 10am - 3.30pm
West Tanfield Village Hall
Join the Vale of York Support Group for a morning of bridge, including lunch and a lesson with Jack Stocken. For more information and to book, email Anthony at Anthony.cumming@btconnect.com

OCTOBER

Dinner Dance
Saturday 14 October, 7pm
De Vere Cranage Estate, Blyley Lane, Cranage, Cheshire
Join the Lord-Lieutenant of Cheshire David Briggs MBE KStJ, Chrissy Lees-Jones and Claire Wright (Patron) for a fun evening of good food and dancing. Tickets, £60 per person. For more information and to book, email Julie at Julie.Huntley@hopeandhomes.org

NOVEMBER

Swapping Seats
Friday 17 November, 12 noon -2pm
Gladstone Library, 5* Royal Horseguards Hotel, Whitehall, London
Journalists Jeremy Paxman and Helen Lewis agree to swap seats and let leading politicians ask the questions, over lunch in historic surroundings at the Liberal Party’s former home. Tickets, £200 per person or £2,000 for a table for 10. For information and to book, email Catherine on Catherine.Butt@hopeandhomes.org

Hollywood Ball
Saturday 25 November
Alrewas Hayes, Alrewas, Staffordshire
Enjoy a sparkling reception and three course meal at this black tie dinner. The night will include live music and dancing, an auction, games, photo booth and more. For more information and to book tickets, please contact Claire on 0769 898 089 or clairewright10@btinternet.com

DECEMBER

SAVE THE DATE!
Hope and Homes for Children’s Christmas Tea and Carol Concert
Wednesday 6 December, 4.30pm and 7pm
St Mary Abbots Centre and Church, Kensington, London