

## **Community Action Romania (CAR)**

### **Trustees Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 2016**

The main activities of CAR, i.e. providing relief to people in extreme difficulties and the extension of the Christian message in Romania, have continued through 2016. These activities were effected through CAR's counterpart, Pro Community Romania, which is a Romanian charity managing the aid in Romania.

Three of the trustees and several supporters of CAR visited Romania at different times during 2016, to encourage, support and observe our counterparts, and were pleased by the progress being made and the careful distribution of aid. In addition Danni Ispas from Romania visited the UK and did a series of presentations to supporters.

Looking back over 2016 it has been a year of amazing highs, challenges and sad losses. In many ways so much has been achieved and generally the situation in Romania continues to be a very slow improvement with more new companies investing in Romania offering more employment opportunities. Average wages still remain one of the lowest in Europe at around 600 Euros per month while the cost of living remains close to that in the UK; hence the need for CAR is as great as ever.

In January we were able to install lockers in local schools to store children's coats, shoes, school bags, lunches and materials, and whiteboards to replace the very dilapidated blackboards.

In September we were able to supply all the children with the exercise books containing the syllabus in Romania. From this year these materials need to be purchased by parents and amounts to approximately £30 per child; for some families on an income of less than £100 per month this would have been impossible. Once again we are thankful the amazing contribution made by the children of Leighton Middle School.

In October a team from Ashford spent a week in Carand cutting wood from the forest (funded by CAR) and then distributed it to the elderly and most needy families. The team also spent the week dismantling the old playground equipment (that was serviceable) and restoring it, and then rebuilt a new play area on the back of the school area. New equipment, including a climbing tower, seesaw, rope swing and bench swing, was added, built at cost by the local carpenter from Carand.

A young person's club meets on a Saturday to bring together young people for social interaction and support. In December there was the usual Christmas party where 60+ attended. One of the activities was to create a banner with pictures from all the children, which was then hoisted over the road to wish travellers to the village a Happy Christmas.

In December all the families in the Adopt a Friend scheme again received a gift of a blanket, juice, coffee and chocolates, in addition to their normal food parcel. The charity was also able to fund a fellowship hot meal at the church for the AaF families, and for those that were too infirm to travel food was distributed to them where practical.

The fire engine donated through CAR and support vehicle remain in good service and have attended a number of fires, saving not just property but lives as well. Given the rudimentary heating in most

houses, carbon monoxide detectors were supplied and a programme of installation in each house in the village has begun.

The benevolent fund for use of the team in Romania in emergency situations continues to be an essential aid. Frequently the team last year faced urgent medical requests and on occasions were called upon to transport people to hospital/doctors on journeys in excess of 50 miles each way.

We are always thankful for our sponsors and donors, many of whom have supported the charity over many years. While it seems harder for us to raise funds than it used to be, our small charity continues to be blessed and our bank balances remain stable. It is worth noting that administration costs remain at a level less than 4% of total Payments.

The trustees Annual Report and Accounts were approved by the trustees

And signed on their behalf by ..... R N Edwards – Chairman