

## **MWA Home & Overseas Paper - May 2019**

### **Two charities the MWA has helped recently: Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and the Swindon Chernobyl Children's Lifeline Link**

#### **The MWA has given £500 to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF)**

The JDRF funds type 1 diabetes research to improve lives and one day eradicate the condition for good. The incidence of type 1 diabetes is growing at an alarming rate.

#### **Quick facts about type 1 diabetes**

Approximately 400,000 people are currently living with type 1 diabetes in the UK, with over 29,000 of them children.

Incidence is increasing by about four per cent each year, particularly in children under five, with a five percent increase each year in this age group over the last 20 years.

Type 1 diabetes affects 96 per cent of all children with diabetes in England and Wales.

Around 85 per cent of people diagnosed with type 1 diabetes have no family history of the condition.

Although it used to be referred to as 'juvenile diabetes', around half of newly diagnosed cases are in people over the age of 18.

The UK has one of the highest rates of type 1 diabetes in the world, for reasons that are currently unknown.

A person with type 1 diabetes will have around 65,000 injections and measure their blood glucose over 80,000 times in their lifetime.

#### **The JDRF**

Works with the UK Government's two major funding bodies, the Medical Research Council and the National Institute for Health Research, to make type 1 diabetes research a priority.

Works with government departments, to help them understand the impact of type 1 diabetes on the UK, and the excellence in research that the UK can provide to the global mission to cure type 1.

Works with researchers and other funders to create new opportunities for funding, and to understand and address some of the barriers that can slow down research progress in the UK.

Gives support and a voice to people with type 1 and their families.

## **The Collection at the MWA Day in 2018 was donated to the Chernobyl Children's Lifeline Link, Swindon.**

There was an accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant on the 26th April 1986. As a result, thousands of children are born every year with cancer or develop it in later life.

**Imagine:** Living the rest of your life in a radioactive polluted environment. There is no escape.

**Imagine:** Eating food that may harm you? But what else can you do?

**Imagine:** Coming to the UK for a few weeks and eating fresh food and breathing clean air and going home with your immune system recharged.

**Imagine:** Knowing that there are people who DO care.

Belarus is a landlocked country in eastern Europe, it was the place most affected by Northerly winds which prevailed at the time of the accident; therefore, most of the fallout (over 60%) occurred over farmland in the south-eastern part of the country. Experts estimate that 25–30% of Belarus's farmland was irradiated and should not be used for agricultural production or to collect wild berries and mushrooms, although it continues to be used for these and other purposes.

The Swindon Link started working in Belarus in 1991 and now has a small office in the capital Minsk, to co-ordinate visa processing, visits, the Family Support program and other projects. It also works in the Ukraine.

Every year, volunteer hosts in Swindon welcome children into their homes for several weeks as part of their own family.

There are group activities and outings during the recuperation visit. This gives the children the chance to interact and to be able to talk together in their own language. Everyone visits the dentist and optician during their first visit to the UK. From necessity some of the cancer care in their home countries has become very advanced, however some of the dental and optical equipment dates back to the 1960s!

It can cost over £500 in air fares, airport taxes and visa fees to get each child to the UK (and home again) in addition to the cost of activities during their stay.

The Swindon Link is currently fundraising to host in summer 2019. For more information there is a Facebook page.