

# *Novi Survat Charitable Organisation*

(New Beginnings – for the destitute of Goa)

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## **Newsletter 046 March 2015.**

It is nearing the end of February and here in Devon we have had a very quiet winter compared with last year. We have had no snow, little rain and few frosts whereas last year the conditions were so bad that the railway line through Dawlish was washed away and Somerset saw some of the worst flooding ever. Although we have had our fair share of gales most Sundays have been sunny and bright and allowed us to enjoy walks along the seafront.

I am looking forward to going to Goa on 9<sup>th</sup> March for two weeks, meeting the children and staff and seeing the new Day Care Centre.

Thank you to all of you who have given me letters, gifts and money to take for the children.

### Day Care Centre.

I am pleased to say that our search for new premises is over and we moved into a new place in mid-February. I have not yet seen it but Roger & Julia who helped in its acquisition took many photos and we now have a lot more space for the physiotherapists to look after and treat the children.

The only downside is that although we have a three year rental agreement we now have to pay over £200 per month rent whereas our previous premises were rent free.

This means we will have to 'tighten our belts' and make savings where we can without detracting from our aim to help as many disabled children as possible.

We are very grateful to Mr & Mrs D'Souza who so kindly allowed us to use part of their premises for the past seven years rent free.

### Starting Point.

Once again we were fortunate to have the students from Braintree College spend two weeks in Goa who painted all the classrooms, the hallway and the outside boundary wall. They also took the children out for a day to the Miramar Park in Panjim where they enjoyed all the facilities including boat rides and followed it up with a picnic lunch and ice cream. For many of these children this will probably be the only time they will have such a day out. The students of Braintree College also bought lots of goodies such as flip-flops, two scooters, two bikes, fruit for every day, and many more items.

Thank you all for giving these children such a memorable time.

As usual the staff have worked their magic and there are 10 children who are ready to graduate to formal education. Regrettably due to lack of available sponsors we will have to limit the number who can graduate to 4 or 5, so if you know of anyone who might like to sponsor a child's

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education please let me know. The cost is £9 per month for dual sponsorship or £17 per month for sole sponsorship. Sponsors do not have to sign up for a long term commitment but can sponsor on a monthly or yearly basis.

This is the story of one of our girls Radhika.

Radhika (who is 4 yrs old) joined Starting Point School just one month after the death of her father. She has two older sisters aged 13 & 14 years. Her mother was in a desperate situation and was unable to find work to support her children. There are no social security or government hand-outs for destitute families. Jane (our head teacher) helped her to get a cleaning job at a nearby kindergarten. Sadly this did not bring in enough money to care and feed the children so the two older girls were married off to their uncles. The older girl now has a baby of her own. Starting Point has been helping when they can providing provisions for the mother to cook such as rice, lentils onions etc. The family will eat rice & dahl every day if they have enough ingredients. Now their home life is a little bit better but we still need to keep an eye on their situation.

This is typical of so many families struggling to exist with many only managing to eat a cooked meal once every two or maybe three days. To many of the children attending Starting Point School the lunch they receive every day is what keeps them alive; one little boy tells us he eats raw vegetables because he is so hungry he cannot wait for them to be cooked!

Another little boy takes everything he gets given (sweets, an orange etc) home to share with his siblings – however he refuses to take home exercise books and pencils because he cannot break them up to share them.

### Educational Sponsorship.

Braintree College students entertained the students who have graduated from Starting Point with a party and lunch plus each child took home a maths set, sweets and fruit. As well as all this Braintree College sponsor two children's education and staff from the college a further two.

Sadly Apika did not pass her final degree exams failing on one paper which she will have the opportunity of retaking in July. We are not really surprised because you may remember Apika was seriously ill in 2014 and missed three months of university time and we have every confidence that she will pass in July.

I have heard that a few sponsors did not receive their Christmas card with the up to date photo of their sponsored child. If you have not received yours please let me know. The packages were individually weighed and posted at the main post office in Exmouth as some were larger as they contained copies of school reports so there should have not been a problem.

### Sponsors & supporters.

Thank you to all who have visited Goa this year and have taken the trouble to visit the school and Day Care Centre.

These include Braintree College students who have been mentioned before and others include Paul & Jean, Roger & Julia and Pat & John. Pat enjoyed her birthday at Starting Point where she shared her birthday cake with the children and staff.

Braintree College also visited the children at Damadem HIV home who enjoyed playing games, having a picnic as well as receiving a goody bag each.

My thanks to those who have brought back goods for us to sell.

Thank you to David Gingell for once again preparing the accounts for the Charity Commission free of charge which is a great financial help saving us in the region of £500 per year.

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I am sure you will all be pleased to know that Hazel who was a volunteer for twelve years is now settling into her new life in France. She misses the children but of course is able to keep in contact with the home.

You may have noticed that in every newsletter I thank everyone for their support. This is because all help whether financial or practical is vital to the continued success of the charity and without it there would be many children without a future worth looking forward to. Fundraising is a struggle but with your help we will be helping those less fortunate than ourselves for many years to come.

Regards,

Clive