

Upper Wharfedale Collection for Refugees



The collection for refugees took place on Saturday 5th and was extremely successful. The churches at Arncliffe, Conistone, Hubberholme and Kettlewell, were opened between 10 & 12 to receive bags of clothing, toiletries, bedding and other supplies from members of the community. Volunteers then sorted and bagged those donations which were not already sorted and labelled (and many had – thank-you).

The donated goods were then transported back to Kettlewell, where they were loaded into two transit-type vans for shipment to Yorkshire Aid in Leeds.



By 3.30 p.m. the supplies were at the Yorkshire Aid processing centre – a disused council leisure centre which has been transformed into a distribution centre for sorting and distributing donated items. Once we had unloaded the vans Mick, a volunteer who runs the logistics for Yorkshire Aid, showed us round and explained the process and some of the challenges they face in getting the supplies to those in need.

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The centre at the moment is sending supplies to the camps at Calais and Dunkerque as well as to Lesvos. Yorkshire Aid work with local organisations in the areas of need to understand priorities and what is needed, and to ensure that the supplies get to those that need them. Mick explained that it is essential to work with local groups in the receiving areas to ensure supplies do not fall into the hands of criminal groups who try to intercept donated goods and sell it to the refugees for profit.

OUTPUT	WHERE	WHERE	DELIVERY	RECEIVED BY
11/11/15	van → CALAIS	EMERGENCY SUPPLIES	MUHAMMAD ALI →	LAWRENCE → YORKSHIRE AID VAN
20/11/15	2 vans → CALAIS	"	"	"
24/11/15	1 van → DUNKERQUE	"	"	YORKSHIRE AID VOL
28/11/15	7 parcels → LESVOS	"	REFUGEE STORE →	SEMPERNA FOUNDATION VOL
30/11/15	1 x van → DUNKERQUE	"	REFUGEE STORE →	YB → R.S. WILKS
10/12/15	1 x van → CALAIS	EMERGENCY SUPPLIES	MUHAMMAD ALI →	YB → NEVIL PETHER
8/12/15	2 vans → CALAIS	EMERGENCY SUPPLIES	MUHAMMAD ALI →	YB → NEVIL PETHER
9/12/15	12 children → LEEDS	CLOTHING etc.	CITY OF SANDERBURY	→ YB → NEVIL PETHER
10/12/15	1 x van → CALAIS	EMERGENCY SUPPLIES	MUHAMMAD ALI →	YB → NEVIL PETHER

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On receipt at the centre supplies are initially put in one of several side rooms covering clothing, boots and shoes, toiletries and bedding. From there they are moved into the relevant processing area of the main sports Hall which has been turned into a factory for sorting and distributing supplies to the areas of need.

Some items - in particular tents and waterproof jackets - are always in high demand and are taken directly to the despatch area. Other items are sorted and put into racking down one side of the building. The volunteers know what type of goods are required in the various locations. Some donated items are not usable due to condition – Mick showed us an example of a pair of trousers with one leg – and these are sent for re-cycling to raise cash to cover transport costs.

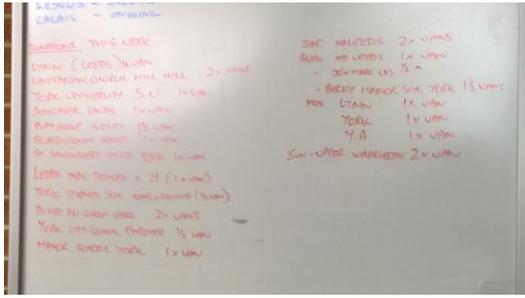


Some items are not suitable for the camps and these are distributed to refugees already in the UK. In the centre of the hall there is a packing area and at the far end, a despatch bay.

When we were there the volunteers had been packing parcels of food and toiletries for an upcoming load. These are packed in “bags for life” in which goods have been donated. Shipments to the camps go in recycled cardboard boxes obtained from supermarkets and fast food chains. The entire operation is designed to be run at minimum cost. Mick said the only thing they really have to buy to operate the centre is packing tape and the only waste produced is the bin liners in which goods are donated.



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The team at Yorkshire Aid were very grateful for the donations, and asked us to pass on their thanks to the people of Upper Wharfedale for their generosity.

Many thanks to all who participated in any way – organising, donating, helping at the churches, and transporting – this has been another great community effort by the people of Upper Wharfedale.

To see higher res versions of these, pictures, [click here](#)