

RAISE MORE THAN THE ROOF THIS CHRISTMAS

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**CHRISTMAS
APPEAL 2016**



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S SUMMARY

Dear Supporter,

BEHIND this perceived stone façade, this grumpy and bah-humbug exterior, lies a not-really-that-old romantic sentimentalist. I'll be honest with you, I love Christmas! As a child, I loved Christmas so much that my mother would have a word with Santa, and the night before the big event I would get a 'cannae-wait present', before I went to bed.

I can't say for certain, but I'm fairly confident that I was her favourite out of the four of us...

Like most in Glasgow's East End, there wasn't much money in our house, but Christmas remained a treat and at least my parents were afforded the luxury of employment to pay for it, if little else.

My own six kids (most of them adults now) also loved and love Christmas – they had no choice really – I had them super excited as soon as Halloween was done and dusted.

But that was all manageable. Just about. Sure it was stressful for my folks and then stressful for my wife and I when it was our turn to play Santa a generation later, yet it was always achievable.

But then and now are different times, different worlds. A kid like me in the late 1960s and 1970s and a kid today have hugely different expectations. Peer pressure wasn't even a thing back then! Certainly not in my limited circle of people.

I still love Christmas but I have a different understanding now. Since taking on this role in 2013 I have become acutely aware just how bad things are for thousands of families. I always knew there was a divide for sure, but I never really understood the extent of it, or its impact, until three years ago. I may have given a passing thought occasionally (and maybe a few quid) to a homeless guy on the street, but I'd never have considered the plight of women and children living in refuge, often in sub-standard accommodation, or what was happening to refugees in our country, or to how kids feel wakening up to nothing on Christmas morning.

That's why charity and support generally, and Celtic FC Foundation's Christmas Appeal particularly, are so important to everyone here at the charitable arm of this football club.

In this edition you'll read about the impact our Christmas Appeal has on families and other charities who provide for those who desperately need care and support. And, I'd be very surprised, if you weren't shown ways to donate too...

However, that's not my purpose for this introductory piece. What I want to do is say thank you. Thanks if you've already given, thanks if you're going to give, and thanks if you're still thinking about it. Thanks if you're chucking a few quid in a bucket, attending one of our events, hosting your own event or getting sponsored to do something to raise cash. Thanks if you've got a few quid to spare and you have given us a tidy or a smaller sum privately. It all adds up.

Thanks to all the staff at the Club and Foundation who have helped, and obviously everyone volunteering for Celtic FC Foundation including our hard-working supporters' committee.

In 2016 in isolation there are so many people – too many, in fact – to thank for helping us make a difference in these past 12 months. Our army of supporters worldwide, our private funders in Glasgow, London and beyond, and our partners and Club partners who share our values have helped transform lives for the better. Thank you sincerely.

Finally, have a great Christmas and remember why we're doing this and why you're playing a part in making it happen. People around us – friends, family, neighbours – often need dignified compassion and support – things that are consistent with the Celtic way. But most of all they need a transformer, something that takes them permanently out of the hardship they're living in. That's a longer-term aim shared by everyone at this football club.

Thanks for your continued support which is very much appreciated.

Tony Hamilton
Chief Executive



CHRISTMAS APPEAL OVERVIEW

Celtic FC Foundation's annual Christmas Appeal reflects the very heart of the Club's charitable and humble beginnings.

This year, we want to help at least 250 local families facing poverty, to provide a meal on the table and gifts for the kids. We want to bring the magic of Christmas to those homes. We are also looking to help vulnerable local pensioners to ease the financial burden at a challenging time of year plus a number of other local charities who support those experiencing homelessness or other disadvantage. The list includes:

Simon Community Scotland

A Christmas lunch for around 120 services users at Celtic Park on Sunday, December 11.

Glasgow Children's Hospital Charity

A Christmas gift for children living with long term health conditions. For many of these children this is the only gift they will receive this Christmas.

Glasgow East Women's Aid

A Christmas meal and gifts for families in the refuge.

Scottish Refugee Council

Supporting refugee families who have just arrived in Scotland, as well as other vulnerable or disadvantaged refugee families.

Glasgow City Mission

Supporting the Foodbank service which, each week, serves an average of 60 households with emergency food and also aims to connect them with other activities.

Loaves & Fishes

Christmas hampers and toys for families in need and those experiencing or facing homelessness.

Spirit Aid

Food hampers, toys and clothing to those in need in the West of Scotland.

The Wayside Club

A refuge and a hot meal during the festive period for the homeless.

The Invisibles

Support on the streets for the City's homeless through the provision of sleeping bags, clothing, footwear, toiletries and signposting.

Salvation Army Parkhead

Food, clothing, advice, signposting, parents and toddlers group and other support for the homeless.

St Roch's

A lunch for the homeless.

Glasgow Night Shelter

Supporting homeless refugees and asylum seekers in Glasgow primarily by providing a hot meal and a safe place for men to stay overnight.

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We are also hosting two Christmas parties at Celtic Park for approximately 400 local primary school children.

In addition, we are proud to confirm a development of the Christmas Appeal in 2016 as we look to support charities in London, Newcastle, Dublin, Belfast, Oban, Greenock, Inverness, Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Ayrshire.

The generosity and compassion of the Celtic Family is unsurpassed, and Celtic FC Foundation is requesting your support once again for an initiative which proudly follows in the footsteps of Brother Walfrid, providing comfort to those on our doorstep.

The Club kicked off the Appeal with a magnificent £10,000 donation and, since then, the support received has been outstanding.

Following the success of our inaugural Founding Fathers' Fast initiative on November 6, 2016, our second Celtic Sleep Out event took place at Celtic Park on Saturday, November 12, with around 100 volunteers spending the night under the stars in very cold conditions. Due to their fundraising efforts, the event is on course to raise a staggering total in the region of £70,000.

Next up is our annual Ghirls for Good event on Saturday, December 3 which is sponsored by Mappin & Webb. The evening of festive fun will see over 300 Ghirls put the P in Party and lend their support to the Appeal.

And there's still time to get involved in our 2016 Christmas Appeal and make a genuine difference to the lives of the most vulnerable on our doorstep.

Together, let's raise more than the roof this Christmas.

To get behind the Appeal, you can:

1. **Donate by Text** – text 'CELT07' followed by '£1', '£5' or '£10' to 70070
2. **Donate Online** – www.celticfcfoundation.com
3. **Donate via Paypal** - www.celticfcfoundation.com
4. **Donate in Cash** – there are collection boxes located in all Celtic Stores
5. **Donate by Cheque** – payable to 'Celtic FC Foundation' and sent to Celtic FC Foundation, Celtic Park, Glasgow, G40 3RE.
6. **Give as you Live via your Christmas Shopping** – www.celticfcfoundation.com
7. **Support our matchday bucket collection on Saturday, December 17** – to register as a volunteer collector, call 0141 551 4321 or email cfcfoundation@celticfc.co.uk

May you and your loved ones have a happy and peaceful Christmas.

Thank you for your wonderful support.



CHRISTMAS APPEAL BENEFICIARY:

GLASGOW EAST WOMEN'S AID

THE gift could be a selection box handed in to the foodbank. It may be a pound placed in a Celtic FC Foundation bucket.

The result, though, could be ensuring safety for vulnerable victims, making Christmas not just a special occasion but the start of a new life.

"It would be a very different Christmas for the people we work with it without Celtic FC Foundation," says Anne Kelly, a counsellor at Glasgow East Women's Aid. "This is not just about people having limited gifts or limited food. The benefits of the Foundation and the support of fans could be the catalyst for people staying safe instead of going back to a violent situation."

The organisation has been 25 years in Glasgow and Anne states: "We support women, children and young people to recover from the effects of domestic abuse. It is all types of abuse: physical, emotional and sexual."

She has been helping the vulnerable as a counsellor for 16 years, 13 of them at Glasgow East Women's Aid and that experience has given her an extraordinary insight into the dangers confronting victims, particularly at Christmas.

"The Foundation provides encouragement – through a cash donation at Christmas, gifts and tickets to games – for people to stay in a place of safety," she says. "We have seen that people can return to dangerous situations because they cannot afford a regular Christmas and they do not want it to be any different for the kids. The help from the Foundation is therefore invaluable. It is keeping women and children safe."

She cites one case before the Foundation became involved with the organisation five years ago.

"We once had a girl who was at the refuge and went home on Christmas Eve. We were contacted by the police days later who said she had been found in the street because she had to run away again. She was in a really bad state.

"But the Foundation has helped us have the ability to provide a good, safe Christmas for women and children who have been to hell and back. It may be the first Christmas that they have left a home and the level of grief and loss can be phenomenal.

"But they can get together in an atmosphere of sociability, have a party for the children with gifts and a decent meal. All the things many of us take for granted."

There are bonuses with the Foundation, says Anne with a smile.

"The people who work there are simply great and, of course, the Foundation helps us with match tickets," she says. "The kids love that in particular because many of them could never afford to go to a game. We also had a refugee woman who thoroughly enjoyed her trip to Celtic Park. It is another step towards reality for people who have led extremely difficult lives."

Anne expands on the help offered by the Foundation: "It gives us toys and gifts but we also get a substantial sum of money that allows us to give families what they miss out on over the Christmas period."

"They have had to flee a violent situation and may be without money, unable to afford even the most basic things at Christmas. So the money from the Foundation pays for parties, pantomime tickets and a Christmas meal for all the women who use the service.

"For some of these women, this is their Christmas and they are extremely grateful. Without the Foundation, that simply would not happen. We could not get the money from anywhere else. This feeling of safety and a return to a sense of normality is an essential part of recovery."

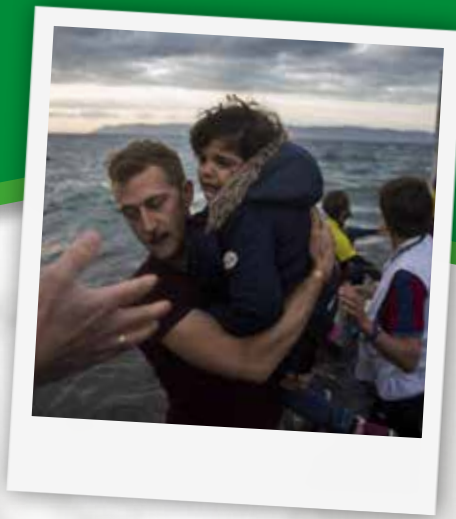
This gratitude is shared by Anne. "I can't thank the people at the Foundation enough. They have made my job so much easier," she says.

"This is a difficult job because you have to deal with so much trauma, so many crises but having the support of the Foundation gives you the realisation of why you do it. You see people sitting at a Christmas dinner, relaxed and chatting away, nicely dressed and actually just being themselves.

"These women are obviously protected by anonymity but it would be wonderful if the fans who support the Foundation could see this. This is not about just buying a selection box to donate or giving money to help, it goes beyond that.

"It's about supplying people with a degree of normality at an important time of the year. People associate Christmas with family and these women and children can share in that without fear. We have try to instil self-worth and self-esteem in broken people."

It is the most worthy of vocations, the greatest gift to the wounded and suffering. It comes with the aid of the Foundation and extends far beyond Christmas.



CHRISTMAS APPEAL BENEFICIARY: SCOTTISH REFUGEE COUNCIL

THEY arrived bereft. They knew they had escaped bloodshed, perhaps even death. But they did not know what a new land offered them. Except for one thing.

"They knew about Celtic," says Pauline Diamond Salim, media and communications officer for the Scottish Refugee Council. "The family had arrived from the mayhem of Syria. They knew nothing of their new home in Scotland except Celtic. They contacted Celtic FC Foundation and that is how a Syrian refugee family came to be sitting in the stands at Celtic Park for a game."

The story raises a smile but Pauline stresses the significance of the attendance at a football match. "It may not be a big thing for us but for a family who have been torn from their own country it is a great event," she says.

It shows they are welcome. It shows that they are valued.

Celtic FC Foundation, of course, makes a substantial contribution to helping refugees settle in Scotland. It extends far beyond the handing out of match tickets.

Pauline first explains what the Refugee Council is and what it seeks to do.

"It is based in Glasgow and has helped refugees for the past 30 years. The people we work with are folks who had to leave their homes. Basically the majority of them are fleeing conflict or persecution," she says.

"They have had to leave really desperate situations and one way or another they end up here. When they arrive in Scotland they are finally safe but it is the start of another journey for them.

"It is obviously a foreign country and most of them arrive here with nothing. They have endured horrific journeys. They have had to leave behind loved ones, their homes, their jobs everything that was familiar to them."

It is the job of the Scottish Refugee Council to help these strangers in a strange land. They have to be assisted in how to come to terms with a new life in a new world where systems are different, where bureaucracy can only be navigated with difficulty, where language can be unintelligible, where home and work are almost impossible to find without dedicated guidance.

Pauline says: "We offer direct support in a practical way, helping them to understand life in Scotland. They do not know where to turn for advice. They need a home and a job, they want to know the options for training or education. It can be hard to find to work

when their skills or qualifications may not be recognised here. There are all sorts of barriers they have to overcome and we want to help them do that."

"It is a project for families seeking asylum," she says. "This is a very difficult and insecure position to be in for a family. You do not know how long you are going to be allowed to live in the country. You do not know whether you can work etc as you are awaiting a decision. People are hanging in there on £35 a week."

"It is about giving families a person they can come to who they can trust," says Pauline. "Giving them that personal contact who can advise them on health care, education, who can take them on days out to the park, show them around the city.

"It is important that families have this contact when they first arrive so problems do not accumulate."

The successes are visible. "There is one boy who has won a scholarship to Glasgow University in engineering after gaining As in all his Highers. These refugees can thrive and flourish. They just need the support in the early days."

Life must be unbearably tense for these families. Their lives are extraordinarily uncertain as the wait on a decision on their fate. She points out that match tickets and a tour of Celtic Park are part of that aid. "It makes them feel welcomed. It gives these people a sense of hope after traumatic times."

The Foundation's support from the Christmas Appeal offers them a lifeline to a happier existence at a very challenging time of year. Pauline is passionate about the success and value of Celtic FC Foundation's initiative.

Scotland has witnessed an influx of more than 3,500 refugees in the past year but Pauline says that the country's message to them has been positive.

"Refugees are welcome. Refugees contribute in many ways including arts and culture. Aspects such as the food and music they bring enrich our lives. When they come it is all about survival but they offer us so much.

"There has been a lot of generosity from the people of Scotland and not just in money. We have had people volunteering to befriend refugees, showing people around, helping with language."

The Foundation is in the front line of this effort, offering a help hand to those stepping ashore to a new life.



CHRISTMAS APPEAL BENEFICIARY: LOAVES AND FISHES

DENIS CURRAN believes in miracles. He sees them every day, prays for them every night.

He labours for Loaves and Fishes, a charity, where no worker is paid and no one in need is turned away. "It is the business of miracles and they happen daily. We just have to open our eyes to them," he says.

He is grateful for Celtic FC Foundation. Loaves and Fishes feeds the hungry and the needy. The Foundation has been there when hope was not quite lost but perhaps being stretched remorselessly.

"Celtic FC Foundation has been an absolutely fantastic help to us. A lot of times it has been the difference between us managing and not managing," says Denis. "The money from the Foundation has come at the right time and allowed us to help someone in desperate need. At times the Foundation has helped to keep us going after Christmas when our resources have been stretched. This is a 24/7 operation and the Foundation has helped keep it that way."

He describes the aims and work of Loaves and Fishes. "It is a total voluntary charity. Nobody gets paid, we do not get any government funding. We are totally dependent on people's goodwill and that is where Celtic FC Foundation comes in along with their supporters. They have been a tremendous help to us.

"We deal with families in need. When Loaves and Fishes started, we dealt with the homeless but now we deal with people coming from a homeless background. We have a foodbank in East Kilbride and we supply anybody in need."

The charity also organises three meals a week in St Stephen's Church in Renfield Street, Glasgow. "They are mostly attended by people from a homeless background who are now in houses," says Dennis. "They may not be able to cook or able to afford to buy food so they get a two-course meal. The menu depends on the weather so if it is cold we will do soup, for instance. The main courses will be something like fish and chips or mince and potatoes.

"At Christmas we do a special meal and the male clients must come with a shirt and tie. If they do have them, then we supply them. The idea is to encourage people to tidy up, to give them a reason to be smart.

"The meal costs about £7.50 but our clients do not pay anything. Our constitution demands we do not charge but sometimes our clients put a £1 in a charity box."

The charity increasingly does a lot of work with the foodbank. "We are open Monday to Thursday at the foodbank. In four days last year we fed 350 families. They are given a box of tinned food, a box of dry goods, and a bag of toiletries. The kids all get a gift. There are vouchers for Farmfoods and a local butcher. Last Christmas we stopped counting at a 1000 people fed."

He acknowledges a debt to Celtic FC Foundation. "It donates financially and we must thank the fans who give food. It all contributes to Christmas for families who are struggling. For some kids it is maybe the first time in their lives that they find out about Santa," he says.

Loaves and Fishes has been operating for 27 years with Denis being involved for the past 24.

He sees both suffering and redemption on a daily basis. "One Good Friday I visited an old lady who had been allocated a house but all she had was a black bag with clothes, a table and a chair, a kettle and a TV that did not work. She was riddled with arthritis and sleeping on floorboards. We were able to help her immediately" he says.

He adds: "We have never turned anybody away. One night we fed almost 300 people on the street. People turned up in cars, handing us food. I believe in the power of prayer. It has never let me down."

The link with Celtic stretches back to the era of Fergus McCann. "Mr McCann gave us £25,000 and we were able to get a new van. This gave us a stability because we were living hand to mouth," says Denis.

He knows that the food and warmth can give his clients the gift of hope. "Some come here and think: 'I remember my life used to be like this and I want it back'."

He illustrates this with a moving story. "I still have a letter written on the back of a social security application. The writer talks about living in a hostel, getting woken up with the news of somebody dying and discussing whoever had the money for the carry-out," he says.

"He tells how he got a voucher for a meal at Loaves and Fishes. He went and had a glimpse of his former life. He made a decision to change, got a house and a wee job."

It is just another entry in the ledger book of Loaves and Fishes and the business of miracles.



MEET THE TEAM:

Jane Maguire, Head of Fundraising and Events

THE work involves a keen grasp of financial figures, a creative mind for fundraising and a stamina that ensures that one can work into the night.

But Jane Maguire, Head of Fundraising and Events, has a simple philosophy about how and why she works for Celtic FC Foundation. "My heart belongs to Celtic," she says simply.

She has been at the Foundation for 10 years, entrusted with organising events and initiatives to allow the Foundation to achieve its aims of helping others.

She tells of her recruitment. "At the time I was not looking for another job and it was a friend who pointed it out, saying, 'You need to look at this. This is your dream job'. They were absolutely right.

"The process was a bit of a whirlwind. I felt so passionately about coming here that I would have been devastated if I had not got the job. It was a dream come true when I did."

Jane has always been a Celtic supporter, going to matches home and away with her mother, brother and a friend. She laughs when it is pointed out that Celtic must consume most of her time, leisure and professional.

"It is pretty much most of my life," she says. "I probably see it more as a passion than a job, to be honest."

She realises she is a contact point for fans, whether through the Supporters' Committee, at events or just by meeting them at games.

The supporters are crucial. This is not a mere slogan but central to everything she does. She is particularly moved by the Christmas Appeal which she believes sums up the club.

"When we meet the families on our doorstep who are struggling, those who are experiencing homelessness, families living in refuge centres, refugees, children who are sick and see the difference our support can make...the impact of that makes the job worthwhile and so much more."

She is not just concerned with raising money but monitors how it is used, visiting the beneficiaries of the Foundation.

"The supporters are changing people's lives and I feel a huge sense of responsibility for the money they raise. I make sure it is spent as it should be and that is one of the reasons we go out to visit projects because I want that reassurance.

"We are the guardians of the supporters' fundraising. It is all about the supporters and we just provide the opportunities for them to get involved."

Interviews with charities that the Foundation supports have revealed a consensus that they believe Jane to be "a star". A personality uncomfortable with any limelight, she dismisses this politely but firmly: "I don't see us at the Foundation as the stars. The stars are the people who support us. We provide a vehicle for the Celtic family. It is the supporters – the members of the Celtic family - who do all the hard work in terms of fundraising.

"They give up their own time, organise support from their family and friends, all to raise money for people who desperately need it."

The fundraising ideas come from a variety of sources. "Sometimes we create the ideas, sometimes we see what other charities have done, sometimes supporters approach us with their ideas, but we do have unique ones because of the club. We can host events around key highlights in the club's history, for example this year we had the Heroes of '86 dinner celebrating that dramatic title win and we will kick off next year with the Tommy Burns Supper in January."

That evening to celebrate the fan, player and manager who became a legend before his untimely death will be the prelude to events marking a certain sunny afternoon in Lisbon 50 years ago.

The supporters will be at the centre of all this. She believes the message is growing about the Foundation and adds: "It helps when we tell the story, share the information with supporters and how we help people directly."

So what is her favourite moment in her work? "The Christmas Appeal," she says without hesitation.

"It takes us right back to our roots as a club, it is following in the footsteps of Brother Walfrid, helping those on our doorstep. It makes me proud every year of the Foundation, of the fans.

"It mirrors the whole reason why the club was set up in the first place. The Foundation is at the heart and soul of the club and that is where it should be. I feel blessed to part of the team that carries that on today."

WE AIM TO:

Improve Health. Promote Equality. Encourage Learning. Tackle Poverty.

At Celtic FC Foundation we are here to tackle issues that will improve the lives of vulnerable children and adults in Glasgow and beyond. But we need your help to do this.

Text CELT07 followed by £1, £5 or £10 to 70070 or donate online at www.celticfcfoundation.com

Celtic FC Foundation is a registered Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (number SC024648) with its registered office at Celtic Park, Glasgow, G40 3RE.

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