



Spring Newsletter 2021

"For God so loved the world, that he sent his only son, that whoever believes in him will not perish, but have eternal life" John 3 v 16

From The Trustees

Welcome to this spring 2021 edition of the A2B newsletter. A2B have the privilege of working with people from many different ages, this edition gives a spotlight to our projects that work with children. As Trustees we are constantly amazed at the generosity of our supporters, and of course, none of what you are about to read would be possible without your faithful support. On behalf of all the A2B staff and particularly our clients, a huge thankyou for your giving and your prayers.

Andrew, David, Nicola, Paul, Sam and Tracy (Trustees, A2B UK)

Helping students through Covid Alketa Hassani, A2B Director

As schools have closed, teaching has moved online. One of the major challenges for the poor of Albania—is that they neither own a computer nor an internet connection. They cannot afford phones or mobile contracts that allow their children access to online teaching. These are the children that A2B are in contact with through our programs and are already at a disadvantage even without the conditions of the pandemic. Without support these children would be left further behind.

Through some amazing giving by the Paul Ritzau foundation A2B have been able to establish modern and well equipped facilities to support these children continue their studies in our Social Day Centres whilst still respecting the social distancing rules established by the Albanian government. We are very grateful to the Paul Ritzau foundation for their generous and committed support of the children that A2B support. They have provided:

- 6 x Smart Active teaching whiteboards
- 10 x video projectors
- 12 x Computers and 12 x mini PC's
- 22 x Computer monitors
- Keyboards, mice and all the other peripherals needed

In the shipment the Paul Ritzau foundation also provided mattresses, quilts, chairs, sofas, benches and many other household materials; along with many boxes of clothes. These new facilities along with the other items are now being used to connect disadvantaged children with their schools and support families out of work or struggling because of Covid-19.



A2B Children's Work

Paul Heffer, A2B Trustee

A2B has been involved in educating children also since its conception. The staff run a variety of lessons and play activities in our three day centres.

For a whole variety of reasons many children in Albania do not attend school. As an organisation we believe that education is a route out of the cycle of poverty and we help children in a variety of ways:

1. Early Years Education
2. After School Homework Support in our warm and dry centres.
3. Promoting Skills and Talents.
4. Happy childhood memories, especially for those living in deprived areas and dilapidated houses.

As a Christian organisation we also teach and promote Christian values and they learn parts of the bible and children's songs. We find that the children are often the evangelists as they take a lot of what they learn back to their parents. Jesus himself said a lot about children so it is right for us to care and nurture them.



We also try to help with health and wellbeing and often run seminars for parents of all aspects including good hygiene, dental, optic, and family planning.

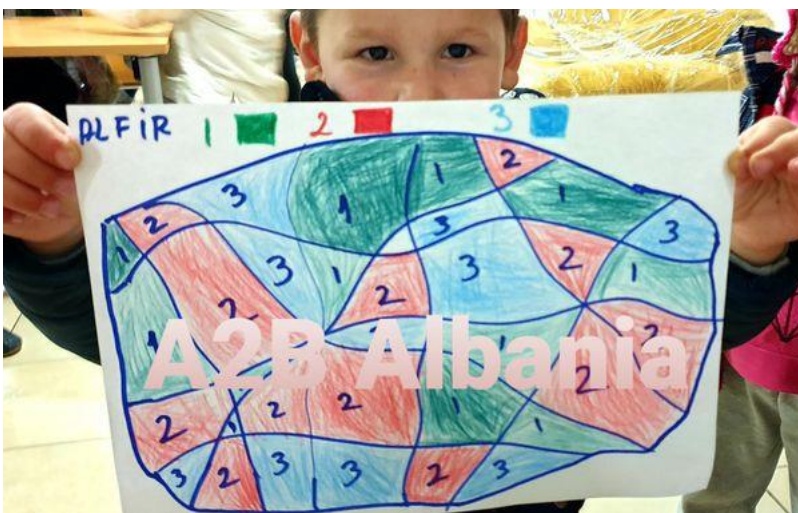
Healthy food is another important aspect of the work and we provide a good nutritious meal every day.

Birthdays and Christmas are always celebrated and it is wonderful to see the joy on their young faces when they are given cards and gifts etc.

Many of the Family Link families have children and our staff try to visit them as much as they can.

Parents are encouraged to send their children to school in return for our help. This has proven to be very successful in many ways.

The "House Of Opportunity" project is located in a large building within the old city walls. It looks after teenagers after they leave the care system from orphanages aged sixteen and have nowhere to go. We currently employ two staff to help them with education, training and to assist in finding work. This project needs a lot of funding and we would appeal to you to help if you are able with a regular donation.



A2B—Why I felt called to get involved

Mark Appleby

I have been asked to write this short article for the A2B newsletter on why I felt called to get involved in A2B. Well, it all started with Sam Whitmarsh inviting me to travel with him to Albania in 2019 for a few days. I said yes, because I have known Sam for number of years and I thought it was a great excuse to have an adventure and go somewhere I have not been to before. Little did I know what a profound impact those few days were going to have on my life. On arrival, we were met by Keta and Elona who I instantly liked, and shortly afterwards by a man called Ardjan, who is just wonderful. I think it is safe to say that I fell in love with all of them. When you meet people who are completely



surrendered to the Lord Jesus Christ; people who don't just believe in God, but follow Him too, and make Him sovereign over their lives, it is captivating and humbling.

For the next few days, we travelled round by car and visited some of the people and programmes A2B is supporting. The word that comes to mind is 'wow'. The difference they are making to people's lives is incredible. We went to see a school that A2B is supporting. The children had not seen Keta and Elona for a few weeks as they had been in England. When they saw Keta and Elona, they screamed and ran into their arms. It was incredibly moving to witness. We went on to visit many other programmes A2B is supporting, including food banks, running kindergartens, and providing 'day centres' for older people. Wherever we went, I saw people's lives being touched by the kindness of God. I wanted to get involved in A2B, because I was captivated by the wonderful people who work for A2B; people who simply want to serve the Lord Jesus Christ with all of their heart.



AmazonSmile

David Ayrton, A2B Treasurer

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Be All God made you to be... Sam Whitmarsh, A2B Chair

It's a continual challenge to raise aspiration in young people who have grown up in a community that has faced exclusion and discrimination for generations. Most don't believe that life will get better or be any different from what their parents experienced. This is the case for the Roma and Egyptian people of Elbasan and Peqin. Education is not highly valued, housing is poor and opportunities for the young people are limited. All of this leads to an increased risk of trafficking. For boys and young men, those trafficked have half the average years of education compared to the population as a whole. For girls and young women, those with economic, health or family difficulties are at greater risk of being targeted.

At A2B we aim to lift dignity and restore hope, we want those children working to collect cans or begging to know how valuable they are - made in the image of God. We aim to provide an atmosphere of love and support that instils that sense of aspiration—that they can imagine a better life, and to know that with hard work and education they have the potential to become a skilled worker. Children at the Hope for the Future and Another Life Peqin day centres have been learning about the risks of trafficking and about all the different kinds of careers they could have when they grow up. For some this will be the first time they will have considered even the possibility they could be a nurse, a chef, a musician or an artist.

Empowering young people with the ability to dream and sowing the seeds of hope is part of what A2B does. Thank you for partnering with us to make these things possible.



Turn your pre-loved books into cash donations!

David Ayrtton, A2B Treasurer

Thanks to a partnership between Ziffit, a free app and website, and Virgin Money Giving, it's easy, fast and free to raise funds from the books you've read. There are 2 ways to do it:

1. Use this link <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/giving/worldofbooks/directdonors/> to go to a web page where you can download the Ziffit app to your smartphone. Then use the phone to scan the barcodes. You will need to choose A2B as your charity at the checkout. When you've got 10 items just parcel them up and use Ziffit's free courier service to send them off.
2. Or if you prefer to use your laptop go to the same page <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/giving/worldofbooks/directdonors/> and search for A2B in the search box. Click the link that appears and start typing the barcodes for each book. When you've got enough, parcel them up in the same way and send them off for free.

That's all there is to it! Ziffit will also accept CDs and DVDs. Why not get decluttering now and make the items you no longer need do some good for A2B and get a new life with a new owner?

A2B Lifting Dignity,
Restoring Hope

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