



Aquabox news

DECEMBER 2021 - AQUABOX NEWSLETTER

Clean Water for Christmas



STUCK for a last-minute Christmas gift idea? We have the answer! Aquabox is repeating its Clean Water for Christmas campaign this year, aiming to provide millions more litres of safe, clean water to families in need around the world.

Despite the pandemic, Aquabox has continued to assemble water filters and send them to people living in disaster zones and refugee camps all over the globe. In total, this year we have sent nearly 1,500 family filters, and 43 community filters. In total, that means there are at least 300,000 people living in terrible deprivation who previously didn't have access to safe, clean water for drinking, for cooking and for washing - but now they have.

"We couldn't have done any of this without our supporters and donors," said Aquabox trustee Kevin Barclay. "The aid we have sent this year has cost us more than £160,000, and we don't get any government funding. Every penny of it was raised by donations - from

individuals, from clubs and societies, and from our partners."

Covid-19 restrictions and lockdowns have hindered the Aquabox effort, but the disasters have continued unabated. "And that's why we're asking for your support again," said Kevin. "A family filter costs us around £25 - that's just the cost of the component parts, because all the filter assembly teams are unpaid volunteers - and that £25 filter has the capacity to deliver up to half a million litres of clean, safe water. We're hoping that more people will take part in the Clean Water for Christmas campaign this year by sponsoring a filter; perhaps by sending it as a gift at Christmas."

To read more about the Clean Water for Christmas campaign, and to make a donation, go to the Aquabox justgiving site. And if you can't afford to sponsor a filter for £25, you can still make a massive difference to somebody's life: just £5, for example, pays for up to 100,000 litres of safe, clean water.



Aquabox gift card, sent to you after donating via the link below.

Help make 2021 a record-breaking Clean Water for Christmas year - go to www.justgiving.com/campaign/cleanwaterforChristmas2021



Aquabox's 30th birthday coming up!

JUNE 18 2022 will be an important date for Aquabox - exactly 30 years since the charity was set up! Pandemic permitting, there will be an event to mark the occasion - watch this space!

Aquabox is supported by



Aquabox is both a registered charity, number 1098409, and a limited company, number 04774277. To contact us:



Aquabox

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Phone: 01629 825178 (outside UK, phone +441629 825178) - please be aware that this number is sometimes diverted to voicemail

Email: enquiries@aquabox.org

Facebook: facebook.com/aquaboxcharity **Website:** www.aquabox.org

Ayr Walks for Water

THE ROTARY CLUB OF AYR and the Ayr Inner Wheel club in Scotland, in association with South Ayrshire Council, have teamed up to organise a new Aquabox fund-raising event: Ayr Walks for Water.

Ayr Walks for Water is open to all, young and old, the super-fit, and the less able. On Sunday May 8 2022, walkers will make their way along the beautiful Ayr Promenade, collect some water, and then walk all the way back – echoing the awful reality of water poverty for far too many people in the world.

It is said that the average distance that women and children walk for water in Africa and Asia is 6km, or 3.7m. Some women are known to carry as much as 20 litres of water on their heads, causing severe damage to the neck and spine over time. Ayr walkers will be covering about the same distance, but only carrying a nominal amount of precious water.

Walkers are encouraged to raise funds for Aquabox through personal



sponsorship – just £25 is enough to pay for an Aquabox filter that will provide safe, clean drinking water for a whole family, for years to come.

And of course it's an opportunity to enjoy the beautiful Clyde coast scenery, the wonderful historic Auld Toun of Ayr, and later watch "the best sunsets in the west of Scotland" (according to the organisers).

Schools and family groups are very welcome to engage both with the walk and with the Aquabox story. Educational

resources for primary and secondary schools to help students learn about the issues of water poverty will be available for download from January 2022, and the online booking website is open from January 10. And sports and other clubs are invited to get creative and contribute their own fund-raising events in the afternoon of the walk.

For more information about the walk, go to www.ayrwalksforwater.org.

Or to get in touch with your ideas, email john@ayrwalksforwater.org.

READY FOR THE NEXT TIME

BECAUSE Aquabox is a disaster relief charity, we can never know for sure when or where the next need will arise. Some events are more predictable than others – every year there will be a hurricane season in the Caribbean, for instance – but to ensure we're ready to meet the need whenever and wherever it arises, we're constantly building stocks of relief aid.

As we head for the Christmas break, our volunteer teams are working towards completing our standard contingency supply of 150 gold boxes each one containing around £150-worth of basic humanitarian aid equipment as well as a family filter. In total, that contingency stock represents well

over £20,000 – and as soon as it's shipped out to the next disaster, the teams will start building up the contingency stock again. It's like painting the Forth Bridge, a never-ending process. As soon as the warehouse is emptied, we start filling it up again.

Every donation Aquabox receives helps us to keep this flow of vital aid going, and to be ready to respond instantly the next time an event somewhere in the world creates the demand – whenever and wherever it is.

To support our work, go to www.aquabox.org and click on 'How you can help'.

And thank you!

Help spread the word

If you have found this newsletter interesting (and we hope you have), please don't keep it to yourself! Spread the word: forward it to friends, neighbours and colleagues; circulate it to your social media contacts; print it out and pin it up on noticeboards. Let as many people as possible know about Aquabox and its work – and encourage them to support us. Thank you!



Aquabox News is published by Aquabox, registered charity no 1098409. To contact the editor, email colin.petty@aquabox.org, or write to Aquabox News, PO Box 5398, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 4ZP. Please share Aquabox news with friends and colleagues – forward it electronically, and/or print out copies to circulate.

TDP signs up as Aquabox partner

GARDEN FURNITURE maker TDP, based in Wirksworth, has committed to a five-year corporate partnership with Aquabox, Wirksworth's own international disaster relief charity.

TDP uses recycled plastic waste to manufacture garden chairs, tables and benches, and also specialises in engraved memorial benches. Using recycled plastic waste helps to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill and into the oceans, all the plastic waste material used is from the UK, and the furniture is virtually maintenance free.

The company has committed to a five-year partnership with Aquabox, making a donation for each item of recycled plastic furniture sold, and substantially increasing the charity's ability to support disaster victims worldwide with water filters and other humanitarian aid.



Aquabox trustees Kevin Barclay (l) and Roger Cassidy (r) with TDP managing director Rob Barlow.

“Following a visit to TDP by Wirksworth Rotary club, I was invited to a reciprocal visit to see Aquabox, and was I was blown away by the dedication of a great team of volunteers,” said TDP managing director Rob

Barlow. “As sustainability and the environment has been at the heart of TDP for over 30 years, the work Aquabox is doing to make a difference to people’s lives around the world, made the choice to help them with funding and

any practical support we can give, an easy decision.”

There’s an added synergy in that both partners are almost the same age: TDP celebrated its 30th anniversary this year, and Aquabox marks its 30th in 2022.

“This is a really important partnership for us both,” said Aquabox trustee Kevin Barclay. “Working with corporate partners like TDP not only generates a significant contribution to the charity’s income, enabling us to help more people in more disaster zones around the world, we also benefit from the support of modern, progressive companies with enterprising ideas. Rob Barlow and his team are really enthusiastic about our work – we’re looking forward to working with them to build awareness of Aquabox and its mission.”

To find out more about TDP, go to www.tdp.co.uk.

KEEN INTEREST AT DRINKING WATER CONFERENCE

THANKS to the generosity of Faversham House, the event organisers, Aquabox had a presence at the 2021 WWT Drinking Water Quality Conference in Birmingham on November 3.

As the name suggests, the conference was focused very closely on the delivery of clean, safe drinking water, and attracted around 150 delegates, from many of the UK’s main water supply companies. Delegates immediately identified the obvious synergy between Aquabox’s priorities and their own, and the Aquabox team – trustee Kevin Barclay and consultant Colin Petty – recorded numerous requests for follow-up information.

“We have been presenting Aquabox to the water industry

for several years now, and we have already established partnerships in the industry, but this was the best yet,” said Kevin. “Because the conference delegates are so closely focused on the need for clean water, they could

instantly see the relevance of what we’re trying to do.”

Kevin is now concentrating on following up contacts made at the event, with the aim of signing up more water companies as Aquabox partners.



Looking for a speaker?

STUCK FOR a speaker for your next group meeting? Or planning further ahead, and trying to get all your speaker slots filled? Either way, Aquabox can help! We have a national network of Aquabox Ambassadors who are keen to tell your group about our life-saving work and about how you can help. Just go to www.aquabox.org, and click on ‘Find out more’.



Where Aquabox is making a difference

AQUABOX has no political, religious, racial or cultural bias. We just send aid wherever the need exists, and wherever we can be confident that there is a reliable local partner at the other end, to oversee final distribution and make sure our aid goes to the people who need it.

These are the places where we have sent aid during 2021:

A consignment of 144 family filters was despatched to **Belize**, where frequent hurricane force storms cause widespread flooding. Rather than wait for this to happen and then send an aid shipment, we have sent a supply of filters which are being held in secure storage for us by a trusted local partner. When the next floods come, we will be able to respond immediately.

According to the World Bank, as many as 1.3 million people in **Gaza** – half of them children – face challenges in accessing basic services like safe water. Working with a partner charity, Hand in Hand for Aid and Development (HIHAD), we have sent 200 Gold boxes containing family filters and basic humanitarian aid equipment to help alleviate this humanitarian crisis.

On 14 August 2021, a magnitude 7.2 earthquake struck the Tiburon Peninsula



in **Haiti**, one of the poorest countries in the world. At least 2,248 people were confirmed killed and more than 12,000 injured, with an estimated 137,500 buildings destroyed and 650,000 people left in need of assistance. It was the world's worst natural disaster this year. Aquabox has responded so far with two shipments totalling 300 family filters and 22 community filters.

An estimated 300,000 people were suddenly made homeless in **Lebanon** when a warehouse full of ammonium nitrate fertiliser in the port of Beirut exploded in August 2020. More than 200 people were killed and 7,000 injured, and 18 months later, thousands of people are still living in desperate conditions. In an effort to reduce their suffering, this year Aquabox has sent a total of 144 family filters and eight community filters.

In **Nepal**, which sits on a major tectonic fault line, earthquakes, landslides, floods and fires are frequent

events. Aquabox regularly sends aid to Nepal, and in 2021 our contribution included 196 Gold boxes containing family filters and basic humanitarian aid equipment, plus a further eight community filters.

Following an approach from the Rotary Club of Stade in Germany, we sent 36 family filters and five community filters to a children's home charity in Senegal. The filters will be used in schools in **Senegal**, where the water supply is unsafe.

Finally, in **Yemen**, another of the world's poorest countries, there is no sign of an end to the devastating civil war. The statistics are horrifying: an estimated 233,000 deaths as of December 2020; four million people forced to flee their homes; 71% of



the population in need of humanitarian assistance; five million on the brink of famine; 2.3m children under five who are acutely malnourished; and 50% of the population without access to safe water. The United Nations has described it simply as the world's worst humanitarian disaster. Aquabox has so far responded with 450 Gold boxes containing water filters and basic humanitarian aid equipment – a drop in the ocean, maybe, but better than nothing at all.



Planning a day out?

IF YOU'RE A MEMBER of a Rotary club, Womens Institute branch, Townswomen's Guild branch, church group, Cubs or Scout group, school group – or anything – and you're looking for a destination for a group visit... why not come and see Aquabox? We're always keen to welcome visiting groups to our depot, demonstrate the filters, show the filter assembly process – and challenge visitors to beat the Gold box packing record! To find out more, or to book a group visit, go to www.aquabox.org, and click on 'Find out more'.