



# Aquabox news

OCTOBER 2023 - AQUABOX NEWSLETTER

Aquabox is supported by



## Aquabox breaks records in 2023

**AQUABOX** volunteers have been hitting new records with aid shipments in 2023!

The year began with a shipment of 250 Gold boxes of mixed humanitarian aid to Pakistan, with support from International Emergency UK and the Kasguma Health and Welfare Trust. Then in February the emphasis was on Ukraine: in total we shipped 60 Aqua 12s (720 family filters) and 20 community filters, with financial support from the Rotary clubs of Stade and Potsdam in Germany, and distribution handled by the Rotary Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Hub in Lviv.

March continued the focus on water filtration, with two Aqua 12s (24 family filters) despatched to Turkey, with help from Project Orphan and the Turkish Ministry for Families and Social Services. And in the same month a further nine Aqua 12s (108 family filters) left the Aquabox depot on their way to Ukraine, again with financial support from the Rotary clubs of Stade and Potsdam, and with WASH overseeing distribution.

Another consignment of 12 Aqua 12s (144 family filters) set off to Malawi in April, with the assistance of Malawi Air Cargo and the Seed Sowers

Trust. And in the same month we despatched two more community filters to Ukraine, this time with support from the Rotary club of Truro.

May saw a massive consignment leave for Syria, with financial support from Schenker AG, and distribution handled by Hand in Hand for Aid and Development. This shipment included 50 Gold boxes, 35 Aqua 12s (420 family filters) and 30 community filters.

Another big shipment of 250 Gold boxes left the depot in June bound for Yemen, in partnership with Jubilee Outreach Yorkshire (JOY); and a further consignment of 250 gold boxes is ready for shipment to Syria. We are awaiting a date for shipment from Hand in Hand for Aid and Development.

As this issue of Aquabox News goes to press, there is a further consignment of 15 Aqua 12s (180 family filters) ready to leave for Ukraine, again with the support of the Rotary club of Potsdam and WASH. And there's another consignment of 250 Gold boxes ready for despatch to Nepal, where our distribution partners are the Gurkha Rifles.

**The total value of these shipments comes to just over**

### What the numbers mean

- **Access to clean, safe water is the single most important priority for people living on the edge** – and every Aquabox shipment is focused on meeting that need.
- A single Aquabox family filter has the potential to process up to half a million litres of water over its working life.
- This year so far we have despatched 3,078 family filters – **enough to potentially convert 1.5 billion litres of polluted water into safe, clean drinking water.** And the year's not over yet!

**£250,000 - a huge output for a charity whose annual income over the past four years has averaged less than £225,000. And because we are funded entirely by donations, we couldn't have done it - any of it - without the generous support of our donors. Thank you all!**

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



**Aquabox**

**Mail:** Aquabox, PO Box 5398, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 4ZP

**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/aquabox charity **Website:** www.aquabox.org

# Aquaboost project aims to double filter output

**AQUABOX** is in the final stages of an ambitious programme to double its output of life-saving water filters - but it needs funds to complete the project.

The Aquaboost project aims to replace the current single filter assembly line with two assembly lines of four stations each, doubling production from 3,000 filters a year to 6,000.

"We have been supported by Forged Solutions of Darley Dale, Pratt & Whitney's UK Supplier Improvement Team, and ITP Aero Technology of Hucknall, and several other corporate sponsors," said Aquabox trustee Dominic Wish, who has led the project. "The new lines will easily meet the 6,000 target, and at full capacity could double it again to 12,000. But we need



Volunteer filter assemblers - aiming to double production.

£45,000 to build the new assembly cells." The shopping list includes new assembly benches, enhanced fume extraction, and a variety of assembly jigs, fixtures and tooling. "If we can get support from companies with toolrooms which could help with this it would be great," said Dominic. In the

meantime, the project team are working with the filter assembly volunteers to assess individual skills and identify training needs.

If you think your company could help - or if you would just like to find out more about Aquabox and its work - contact [dominic.wish@aquabox.org](mailto:dominic.wish@aquabox.org).

## Pivotal Energy becomes an Aquabox partner

**IN MAY** this year, the utilities consultancy Pivotal Energy announced it is partnering with Aquabox to help the charity provide access to clean water to those impacted by natural or man-made disasters around the world.

Pivotal Energy is a client-focused team of experts in gas, water and electricity installations.

It undertakes feasibility studies including network capacity checks, new utilities connections, electric vehicle charging, temporary building supplies, site clearance, disconnections, diversions, meter removals, purging, and formal design documentation and technical guidance.

Having recently established a 'Green Team' initiative, the company had been looking for a charity partner which aligned with its values and cultural aspirations. "We are proud to partner with Aquabox to help bring clean water to communities in need," said managing director Robin Norton, seen right with volunteer Kevin Barclay at the Aquabox depot.



## Challenge launch is a big hit



**2023** saw the launch of the Aquabox Challenge and Badge in Girlguiding Leicestershire - and it's now available to Guides and Scouts in other counties too.

The Aquabox Challenge is designed for Guides and Scouts of all ages, and is available as a free pack by email. The pack includes full details of the challenge - the participant can choose and complete the questions and activities to suit their age - and there are lots of games and activities on offer. There's also information about Aquabox and its life-saving work. to learn how to 'save a life' and where the answers can be found to the questions.

To order the challenge pack, email [raynsylv@gmail.com](mailto:raynsylv@gmail.com).



# Aquabox responds to the Turkey/Syria earthquake

**IN FEBRUARY 2023**, two massive earthquakes struck southern and central Turkey and northern and western Syria, causing widespread damage and tens of thousands of deaths, with more than 30,000 aftershocks in the following months. There was widespread damage over an area of about 140,000 square miles, an estimated 60,000 people were killed, and an estimated 1.5 million people were left homeless.

Aquabox responded immediately, working with partner organisations to send a substantial consignment of aid to the area.

While Aquabox's volunteer teams were preparing the shipment, our friends at the Rotary Club of Stade in Germany through their connection with RC Paderborn, also in Germany, introduced us to the international logistics provider DB Schenker Arkas. Schenker generously offered to fund the cost of shipping a 20ft container to the affected area, and RC Stade and RC Stade Elbmarschen also made significant financial contributions. This consignment provided humanitarian aid for more than 250 families, and a source of safe, clean water for as many as 12,000 people – and another UK charity, Water Survival Box, provided a further two hundred boxes of aid as well.

Aquabox's trusted associates in the area, Hand in Hand for Aid and Development (HIHFAD), oversaw distribution of aid to families on the Turkish-Syrian border. HIHFAD has been supporting displaced persons and families caught up in the conflicts in the region for the past 20 years, and Aquabox has partnered with them for the past 10 years.

Subsequently, we established a new partnership with Project Orphan, which has been working through the Turkish Ministry for Families and Social Services (MfFaSS). Project Orphan has been working in Hatay province with lone children and with families who have been displaced or lost their homes following the earthquake.



*Project Orphan volunteers demonstrate the Aquabox filter.*

The MfFaSS facilitated the customs clearances for humanitarian aid that Project Orphan have already shipped into Turkey, and helped the charity to release essential aid from the government-run AFAD storage depots. MfFaSS also supported the charity to work with children and families in displaced persons camps to provide them with more security.

Based on the success Project Orphan has already had in getting aid into Turkey, and working with MfFaSS to distribute the aid into Southeast Turkey, we asked them to include a trial consignment of two Aqua12s (ie 24 family filters) with their next aid shipment, and we will therefore be looking at using this partnership for future shipments of water filters into the earthquake zone.

## Wirksworth twinning supports Aquabox

**WIRKSWORTH** celebrated 30 years of town twinning in June, and the town's Twinning Association welcomed guests from twin towns Die (pronounced Dee) in France, and Frankenau in Germany. A highlight of the weekend was a visit to the Aquabox depot, to see water filters being manufactured.

Wirksworth's mayor Sean Barker welcomed the delegations to the Town Hall, and Renate Thuma from Germany and Isabelle Bizouard, mayor of Die, brought formal greetings from their towns.

Other events included presentations on Wirksworth's history in German and French; a walk of discovery around the town; and a range of activities including yoga, clay modelling, clog dancing, drumming, singing and a presentation from Cornelia Müller from Frankenau on the Bauhaus design movement. More than 100 people attended a celebration meal celebrating 30 years of friendship, with an address from the High Sheriff of Derbyshire, Theresa Peltier.

Aquabox was provided with an opportunity to demonstrate the family filter at the Town Hall reception, and each twin town was presented with an Aquabox filter to take home to explain how they can be used in emergency situations. The following day, Aquabox volunteers welcomed twinning visitors to the depot, and took the opportunity to spread the Aquabox message further across Europe.

## Quizzing for Aquabox



**TONBRIDGE** Rotary Club in Kent nominated Aquabox as the charity to benefit from the club's annual charity quiz in June – and raised £1,000 to help with Aquabox's life-saving work!

# How we are working in Morocco and Libya

**THE DEVASTATING** earthquake that hit southern Morocco in September killed many people, and destroyed homes, villages and vital infrastructure. Then only a week later, severe flooding in Libya claimed hundreds of lives, as well as destroying essential infrastructure.

In the immediate aftermath of disasters like this, there is a high risk of deadly water-borne diseases such as cholera – and the need to provide safe drinking water is critical in order to avoid further loss of life.

Since the disasters occurred, Aquabox has been working with its partners in the region to set up a secure supply route into the disaster zones. This work has now been completed, and early in October a large consignment of filters left the Aquabox depot in Derbyshire, bound for Morocco and Libya together with a substantial shipment of Aquabox Gold boxes, packed with mixed humanitarian aid.

Our partner in this response is International Emergency Team UK (IETUK), the Fire Aid-affiliated charity with whom we worked when responding to last year's floods in southern Pakistan. IETUK has established a team of trusted distribution and delivery partners on the ground in both countries, and they will manage the distribution of our shipments to those most in need.

The joint consignment will include 250 Gold boxes, 20 community filters, and 288 family filters – enough to meet the daily water needs of more than 15,000 people. Sincere thanks to everyone who has supported our response to these two disasters.

# Lester Lowe supports Aquabox

**LESTER LOWE**, an agricultural and builders merchants based near Ashbourne in Derbyshire, has joined the growing list of Aquabox's corporate supporters.

Lester Lowe is a major distributor of agricultural and building-related products in Derbyshire, growing steadily for more than 50 years, supported by a dedicated and knowledgeable workforce and a loyal customer base.

Ben Furness, a director at Lester Lowe, said that supporting local charities is central to the company's philosophy, and getting involved with Aquabox was a logical extension of this. In fact there is already an established relationship, because every Aquabox Gold box that leaves the depot includes a basic kit of tools including a hammer and a pack of nails – and all the nails are supplied by Lester Lowe.



## New look Aquabox website ready



**HERE'S A FIRST GLIMPSE** of the new Aquabox website. It's cleaner in appearance, more user-friendly, and it's built on a much more robust platform. Go to [aquabox.org](http://aquabox.org), and have a good look around!

## Water skittles with the scouts



**AQUABOX** played a part at the Derbyshire Scouting Activation Weekend this summer. As part of the day, Aquabox offered 'breakout' activities, including aid box packing and water carrying challenges. Our final session was 'water skittles' – a real winner, and a great way to re-use water bottles and old tights! For a £1 donation, all the cubs taking part in our activities received an Aquabox Challenge badge.

## Truro Rotary Club raises funds for Aquabox

**CORNWALL** is a long way from Derbyshire – but grateful thanks go to the Rotary Truro Evolution Club for their support for Aquabox.

In June, the members of the club used their stand at the sixth annual Truro Business Improvement District Children's Day to raise funds to send Aquabox water filters to Ukraine.





# Aquabox supports Malawi relief effort

**FREDDY** sounds like a friendly, harmless sort of name. But when Very Intense Tropical Cyclone Freddy hit east Africa in February and March 2023, it was anything but harmless, causing serious damage and loss of life in Mauritius, Reunion, Madagascar and Mozambique – and most of all, in Malawi.

Malawi experienced the full impact of Freddy: incessant rains caused catastrophic flash floods, the nation's power grid was crippled and its hydroelectric dam rendered inoperable, and at least 1,216 people were killed. The floods devastated many regions, washing away homes and people, and leaving infrastructure ruined. And this was in a country which was already trying to deal with the worst cholera outbreak in its history.

By mid-March the government of Malawi had established 534 camps, to house more than half a million displaced people, and when



*Seed Sowers Trust volunteers demonstrating how to use the Aquabox water filters.*

Aquabox received a call for help from one of our partners on the ground, we were only too willing to help. In early April a shipment of 168 water filters left the Aquabox depot in Wirksworth, destined for Malawi – not nearly enough to address the water needs of the devastated nation, but we sent everything we could manage at the time.

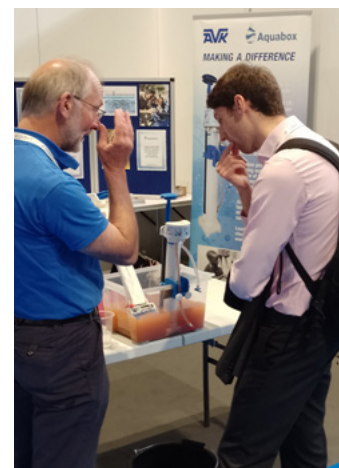
Distribution at the destination was supervised by Seed Sowers Trust, our trusted partner in Malawi, with whom we have worked successfully in the past.

If you would like to support our effort for this, or other similar disasters, you can donate directly through our website: [www.aquabox.org/donate-online](http://www.aquabox.org/donate-online).

## Aquabox at Utility Week Live

**THANKS TO** the generosity of the organisers, Aquabox had the opportunity to exhibit at Utility Week Live 2023, the UK's only exhibition covering all the utility sectors, at the Birmingham NEC on May 16-17.

Aquabox volunteers demonstrated the Aquabox water filter and explained the charity's work to scores of exhibition visitors, including key decision-makers in the water industry. Over the past few years, Aquabox has been able to establish corporate partnerships with a number of companies in the water industry – companies which recognise the synergy



## Aquabox well dressing



**WELL DRESSING** is an ancient Derbyshire tradition – its origins are uncertain, but one theory is that it was started by either the Romans or the Celts, to give thanks for the county's many fresh water springs. For those

not familiar with the custom, well dressings are short-lived works of art created by pressing flower petals and other natural materials into a bed of wet clay, and traditionally they were placed around wells, springs and other water sources.

This year's Aquabox well dressing in Wirksworth was designed by the artist Iain Mackay (who is also an Aquabox volunteer), and was created by a volunteer team using seeds, leaves, wool, moss, dyed coconut, rice, pulses, crushed marble, grit and eggshells as well as the traditional petals.

And of course a custom which celebrates the availability of pure, safe drinking water is a very appropriate way to celebrate a charity which works to ensure that people in dire circumstances have access to pure, safe drinking water.

between their industry and a charity which is committed to providing safe, clean water for people in desperate conditions.

### Utility Week Live

"I'm delighted that Aquabox – and by extension those it helps – have benefited from the association with us," said Amanda Barnes, chief executive at Faversham House. "Our work with Aquabox is part of our positive social impact, and we are keen to continue it."

# How corporate partnership works

**AQUABOX is always interested in creating corporate partnerships with companies which share our values and want to support our work. Partnering with Aquabox is a great way to achieve your company's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) or Environmental, Social and Governmental (ESG) objectives.**

In a highly competitive business environment, where customers and shareholders are increasingly scrutinising the CSR or ESG performance of businesses, we can work with you to shape our partnership to deliver your CSR aims while helping us to save more lives. Our work attracts positive media coverage, and is widely respected.

Each partnership is tailored to meet our joint aims, and can include benefits such as:

- Corporate branding on shipments of Aquabox water filters and humanitarian aid

- The opportunity for your staff and colleagues to participate in assembly and packing at the Aquabox depot
- Partner presence on the Aquabox website
- Partner branding in the Aquabox News newsletter
- Acknowledgement and publicity on the Aquabox Supporters Groups on Facebook and LinkedIn
- Support with PR activity, and copy and images for use in press release and case studies
- A standing invitation for your teams to visit the

Aquabox depot, and to see our water filters being assembled and tested

- Volunteering and team-working days for your staff, your customers and your suppliers
- Water-themed challenges to develop employee engagement
- And Aquabox speakers and demonstrators for your company meetings or corporate events.

Aquabox has no religious or political affiliation – it's a volunteer-led charity which has been saving lives around the world for

more than 30 years. Almost all of our income is spent directly on assembling water filters and packing boxes of humanitarian aid. You can be confident your support will make a real difference.

And partnering with Aquabox is a win-win: we are able to help more people in need, and you're able to achieve more of your company's CSR/ESG objectives.

If you would like to discuss the benefits of partnering with Aquabox, or if you would like to visit our depot to find out more about us, please contact Colin Petty via email: [colin.petty@aquabox.org](mailto:colin.petty@aquabox.org).

## Corporate volunteers get packing!



**VOLUNTEERS** from two of our corporate partners, AVK UK Ltd and Fusion Group Ltd, joined the team of Gold box packers in May. They helped to get a consignment of Gold boxes ready for shipment to Turkey, for onward distribution to areas in Syria where people had lost their homes and their loved ones as a result of the earthquake.

## Coffee morning raises funds

**OUR SINCERE THANKS** go to Chesterfield residents Elaine and Alan Kirk, who decided in July to host a coffee morning in aid of Aquabox in their home. About 20 of their friends and neighbours came along and enjoyed coffee and cakes, and Elaine and Alan also organised stalls of second-hand books, jigsaws and bric-a-brac. "We hoped we might raise £100," Elaine said. She was too modest – the final total from the morning was a startling £237!





# Looking for a speaker?

**IF YOU'RE** a member of a club, association or other group that ever needs a speaker, Aquabox would be delighted to help!

We have a network of Aquabox Ambassadors across the country, who can give a presentation, demonstrate how the Aquabox filter works, show the Gold Box and its contents, and explain how Aquabox delivers life-saving aid to disaster areas and conflict zones around the world. We'll tell you about the history of Aquabox, how the filters are assembled by our volunteer teams, our current disaster relief campaigns, and how you can help.

Over 30-plus years, the

Aquabox Ambassadors have delivered thousands of talks to Rotary clubs, Womens Institute branches, Townswomens Guilds, Probus clubs, U3A groups, church groups, schools, social groups - basically anyone who is interested. And the feedback we get is extremely positive:

- "For a small charity, Aquabox is very inspiring, and you certainly educated and entertained us!"
- "You came to talk to our Townswomen's Guild - we were very impressed by the work you do."
- "Thank you for your enlightening talk - we all came away with a greater understanding of



your aims; and the filter demonstrations were an eye opener, what a fabulous invention."

- "We were all really interested in your charity, and thoroughly enjoyed your talk - thank you for fielding so many questions."

All we ask is a modest speaker fee (we suggest £50, but feel free to make it more), and the opportunity to rattle a collecting tin in case members of your

group feel moved to make a personal donation.

To arrange for an Aquabox Ambassador to visit, go to [Aquabox.org](https://www.aquabox.org), and click on 'What we do' and then on 'Book a speaker'.



## Visit the Aquabox depot to find out what we do

**AQUABOX** is a genuine community project - we have more than 70 volunteers who come to our depot in each week to assemble and test the family filters, and pack the gold boxes of humanitarian aid items.

A visit to the depot really brings the Aquabox operation to life. Here you can watch the assembly teams assembling the filters and testing them to ensure that they are fit for purpose. You can marvel at the skills of the packing teams as they use their ingenuity to squeeze all the items of humanitarian aid into the Aquabox gold boxes - and still manage to close the lid. And if you fancy yourself as a good holiday packer, we'll give you a chance to pack your own Gold box.

Why not make a day of it? After an hour or so at the depot learning about Aquabox, you can retire to one of our excellent local inns or cafes, before visiting one of the great attractions of the area, such as Chatsworth House, Haddon Hall, Crich Tramway Village or Arkwright's Mill at Cromford - the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution. It's a great day out.

We can arrange special visit for schools, scouts, guides and other young people's groups. Each event can



be tailored to the group, and provide some real educational messages around the life-giving value of water, and the challenges many communities face every day providing families and children

with safe drinking water, particularly in the aftermath of a disaster.

Booking a depot visit couldn't be easier - just go to [aquabox.org](https://www.aquabox.org) and click on 'Who we are'.

# “IT’S A REALLY GOOD EXPERIENCE!”



Molly Bond

**CURRENTLY STUDYING** for A-levels at Anthony Gell School, 17-year-old Molly Bond completed a week in July as Aquabox’s first work experience student. She had found out about Aquabox at a Y7 assembly and, thinking about what to choose for work experience, decided it would provide a good opportunity to make a difference.

It turned out to be a varied and enjoyable week. Her work included packing boxes of humanitarian aid, helping to assemble water filters, and shelf stocking in the warehouse, as well as learning from depot manager David Wildgoose about the charity’s financial management.

“I hadn’t realised what went into the charity – it’s more like a small business,” she said. “I’ve helped to make water filters, learning how much work goes into them and packed boxes of aid and I’ve learned about the financial planning involved.” She was also asked to consider and recommend ways in

which Aquabox could get its message across to secondary schools.

Molly is aiming to do a degree course with a political angle, but wants to travel as well, maybe working for Voluntary Service Overseas.

After university, she would like work connected with politics – she has already done a lot of canvassing for the Labour party. She also works part-time at a pub in South Wingfield, she’s learning to drive, she spends time ‘buddy reading’ with Year 7 pupils at Anthony Gell School, and she’s also a member of the school parliament. “It’s a bit busy sometimes,” she says, modestly.

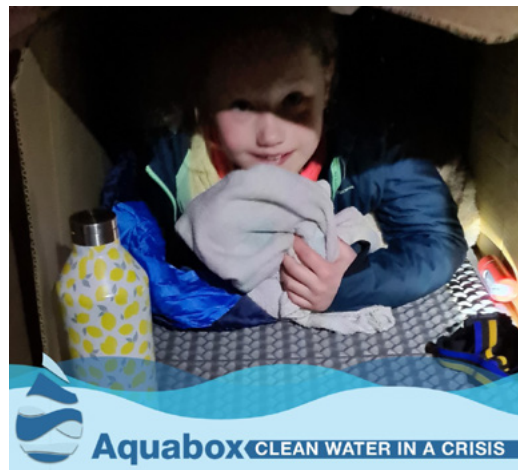
Asked how she felt as her week came to an end, Molly said “I think young people should get more involved with the charity, because there’s a disconnect with the community. And Aquabox needs to promote the fact that it has a work experience programme – because it’s a really good experience!”

## Sponsored sleep for Aquabox

**BACK IN MARCH** this year, the 3rd Codnor Scout Group visited Aquabox HqO for a look at what the teams do to support those in need of clean drinking water.

The scouts were so impressed that they decided to raise money for us, by having a sponsored sleepover at their scout hut.

But there were no tents for this group – they used cardboard boxes instead! They taped their boxes together to make individual sleeping ‘pods’ which they laid on the hardstanding by the hut. It was a chilly night, but these hardy scouts and



their leaders put on their woolly hats, snuggled down in their pods, and slept



through the night. And now they want to do it again! A massive thank you to Codnor

Scouts – your donations will go a long way and Aquabox appreciates your efforts.



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