

## Red Cross Shoe Box Appeal

For some years I have been involved in the annual shoe box appeal organised by the Red Cross to assist refugees and displaced persons. A shoe box is filled with a few essentials and small treats as a gift for a child who would otherwise go without at this time of the year. I have been in touch with the Vice-President of the Red Cross in Hampshire to check if the Christmas Shoe Box appeal is to take place this Christmas.

Due to the COVID 19 virus the refugee drop-in centre in Portsmouth has been closed since the March lockdown. Subsequently they decided they were unable to do the usual boxes. However it was agreed the need was greater than ever. There are just under 300 refugees in Portsmouth of which 100 are children. Therefore they have said they will make space in their offices for up to 50 boxes.

I have taken it upon us, Hambledon village and WI, to see how many we could donate towards this cause. I am happy to put together the boxes if you are unable to do so. This is what is involved :-

~ Line and cover a shoe box with Christmas paper

~ Decide on the age bracket you are buying for; 3-5, 6-11, 12-15

~ Decide on whether you wish to support a boy or girl, and discreetly mark your box accordingly

Suggested items, select from (you won't get them all in a shoebox!):

- soap
- flannel
- hairbrush
- gloves/scarf
- sweets/chocolate
- socks
- crayons/pads
- book/jigsaw/ball/game
- soft toys
- hair accessories

I will need the boxes to be with me by DECEMBER 7<sup>th</sup>, I will then take them to the Portsmouth centre.

For those who would prefer, the Red Cross is asking for £10 supermarket vouchers to be distributed to the refugees over the Christmas period. Please let me have these too, or if it is easier donations in units of £10 would be very gratefully received.

Due to COVID 19 there is a backlog of Home Office appeals and in addition the Red Cross is operating at reduced capacity. The need is even greater this year.

Let's see what we can all do!

Please contact me for any further information. Ginnie Palmer (02392 633999)

**PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU ADHERE TO CURRENT GOVERNMENT COVID-19 RULES AND GUIDELINES AT ALL TIMES**