

Sellafield staff thanked for Ukraine relief effort

The President of the Association of Ukrainians in Poland sent a letter of thanks in recognition of aid convoys delivered from west Cumbria.

Current and former Sellafield Ltd staff supported a community effort which sent essentials like medicines, sanitary products, and nappies.

These were supplemented with items from Sellafield's stores including: sleeping bags, camp mats, bio wipes, dried food, torches and batteries, hand sanitiser, marigold gloves, goggles, paper suits, and cover shoes.

The aid was dispatched to logistics hubs in Poland, and forwarded to local refugee camps and families in need in Ukraine itself.

Jan Syrnyk wrote:

Most sincere thanks for your kindness, solidarity, and help for Ukraine. Because of your hard work and selflessness we had the chance to use (the products you brought) and pass in an appropriate form to those who stayed in Ukraine. Thank you. We can count on you!

Current and former Sellafield workers including Gordon McKay, Kevin Agnew, Tom Kelly, Shaun Kelly, and Richard Wilkinson were involved in the effort.

David Connolly, a Sellafield Ltd employee who supported the work, said:

What started out as a quick response from the local area for donations to hubs in Poland turned into a much larger and more organised effort.

The UK's early efforts to deliver aid to Ukraine were hampered by traffic issues but the group found an enterprising way around the problem.

David added:

There was a bottleneck with the large lorry transports from the UK.

However, by using volunteer drivers and smaller vehicles, backed by financial donations to fund fuel and ferry journey, we were able to get humanitarian aid batches through in just a couple of days.

A huge thanks to everyone who has contributed to this effort, including local organisations and the ferry companies who offered

massive discounts.

The effort involved community members from across Cumbria.

David said:

Deliveries initially went via Polish shops in Maryport and Carlisle before being transported to hubs in Poland and then distributed to local refugee camps and key areas in Ukraine.

After the local shop donation hubs had been overloaded, the efforts stepped up a gear with donations also collected at supportive local businesses.

The business donations were taken to Forth Engineering, in Cleator Moor, combined with other local donations, and sorted before being transferred in 10 vans to Poland.

The van drivers worked in teams to tackle the mammoth journey.

One of them, Gordon McKay, said:

We set off on what was a journey offering a constant stream of new, novel, and unfamiliar experiences.

There were elements of anxiety and apprehension but they were overcome by the welcome we received and the opportunity to make a real difference.

Separately, Sellafield Ltd has provided advice to Ukraine on nuclear issues.

The company has given strategic risk management guidance, via the World Association of Nuclear Operators, and is working on co-ordinated UK support for the International Atomic Energy Agency in Ukraine and the agency responsible for Chernobyl.

Phil Hallington, Sellafield Ltd head of policy, said:

We have been working with community, national, and international partners to understand how we can best assist in the local response to the crisis. I'm delighted at our recent efforts.