

SCHOOLS CHRISTMAS SUGAR COLLECTION

B.E.F.A.

[The Buckingham Emergency Food Appeal]

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(Reg. Charity No. 1066578.)

PLEASE HELP THE HOMELESS

THIS CHRISTMAS

September 2005.

Dear Head Teacher,

This letter, my first since taking over the **sugar** Appeal from Peter and Polly Bowles, is to ask for your help in our **19th Annual Christmas Collection of Sugar** for the homeless from the schools of Norfolk. It's time to ask again if you will be kind enough to help us to bring some comfort to the homeless and vulnerable at what is for them a particularly difficult time of year.

We ask children to collect **sugar** because they can carry it easily, yet it feels "important", and they know the "comfortable" feeling it brings. A packet of **sugar** is affordable, which allows most families to participate. **Sugar** also packs, transports, and stores easily, and, whatever we may feel about the rights and wrongs of **sugar** consumption, it is needed by the Shelters in vast amounts, both in cooking and in hot drinks.

We hope that British Sugar will agree to help us again this year (as they have for the past 4 years), matching packet for packet, up to a total of 2 tonnes, the amount of their Silver Spoon brand of **sugar** collected. Last year Norfolk schools collected enough **sugar** to supply the winter needs of all the Open Christmases, Homeless Shelters and Women's Refuges in Norfolk and north Suffolk, as well as other Agencies who help the homeless, such as the Salvation Army. Some went to similar projects in Cambridgeshire and Manchester, and some to Crisis and other projects in London.

Many Norfolk schools also collected money for us from Harvest Festivals, Christmas Concerts, "Come As You Like" Days or other fundraisers, which helped us buy traditional Christmas foods (like Turkeys and Christmas Puddings) for local projects for the homeless.

Just what BEFA does is on the attached Fact Sheet. We sincerely hope that you will feel able to join the band of Norfolk Schools (over 50 last year) who help us. If you require any more information, or would like to be put in touch with another school which has collected **sugar** for us, please let me know. We try to make things as easy as possible. I can supply posters and a speaker if you wish (but please let us know as soon as possible if you do!)

One of our volunteers will collect the **sugar** from your school at a time convenient for you. Our collection schedule gets hectic in the last few weeks of term, so let us know as soon as possible if you would like to help so we can make arrangements to suit you.

Thank you for taking the time to read our unique Norfolk Appeal. We look forward to hearing from you, and hope you will be part of the ever-increasing number of schools who do so much good by collecting **sugar** or, if it is more convenient for you, money, for the homeless at Christmas. You can have so much fun doing it too....I know, because I was, until recently, headteacher at one of the participating schools .

Yours sincerely,

Peter Gibley

*P.S. Many of you learned, as I did, to admire the very special qualities of Peter and Polly Bowles. They're fine, but watching as I take care of their special baby! Please help me to raise a record amount of **sugar** and money, partly as a tribute to them for their vision and hard work.*

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2005 FACT SHEET

BEFA is a locally founded, locally operated charity with roots in the farming community and a strong commitment to the people of Norfolk. It has a 20 year history of bringing good food from the people of Norfolk to the homeless.

BEFA's mission is simply to help feed the homeless at Christmas, working through established shelters, supported accommodation projects, etc. and with other experienced agencies such as the Salvation Army which have daily contact with the homeless.

BEFA is a 100% volunteer organization. There are no paid staff and administration costs are negligible. Almost every penny donated goes to purchase food.

Local farmers donate most of the fresh produce - more than 20 pallets in 2004.

Food Wholesalers and Manufacturers donated foodstuffs at Christmas, and many more during the course of the year too.

Norfolk school children donate sugar - over 3 tonnes in 2004.

British Sugar matched the "Silver Spoon" sugar donated by Norfolk schoolchildren in 2004, bringing the total amount of sugar collected and distributed to shelters since last Christmas to over 5 tonnes!

Norfolk families and Schools make donations of cash, which is used to purchase the necessary food items (like Turkeys and Christmas Puddings) which have not been donated. In 2004 this amounted to over £20,000.

Local Charities recognize the importance of our work by sending donations.

Local volunteers donate time, office space, supplies, etc.

Local businesses help with postage, copying, transportation and warehousing.

BEFA sends only the food that is needed. Each homeless project is sent a shopping list of the Christmas foods BEFA can provide. We ask them to mark the quantities of each food item they expect to need, and add a "wish list" which BEFA attempts to fulfill. The lists are then collated and we at BEFA work to come up with the quantities of food needed.

BEFA provided food for more than 3000 meals for the homeless of Norfolk during Christmas 2004. In addition we sent lorry loads of food to Cambridgeshire, to Manchester for over 60 homeless projects in the northwest, and one to Crisis in London. All of these lorries were filled to overflowing!

**IF YOUR SCHOOL IS ABLE TO HELP,
OR IF YOU REQUIRE FURTHER INFORMATION,
PLEASE CALL PETER GIBLEY ON 01603-465733
[OR PETER AND POLLY ON 01692-407262]
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**