



# The Catherine Bullen Foundation

*Making a difference in rural Namibia*

## NEWSLETTER

No: 45

Winter 2021

### ***What a Debacle!***

At the beginning of October, the British Government announced that Namibia was to come off its Red List. This was fantastic news and we duly booked our trip to Namibia for the end of January 2022. On 25 November, the Government announced it was back on the Red List to slow down the spread of the Omicron variant, so our plans with many others were in disarray and we had to cancel our trip. Then the Government realised they had shut the door after the horse had bolted and took Namibia off the Red List again on 14 December. But with cases rising in the UK and Namibia this has left us with a dilemma on whether to go or not. We have decided to wait until 15 January before we make a decision which is when the current restrictions in Namibia are reviewed. If we are happy with the situation, we will go around mid-March and stay until around the end of May.

### ***The Namibian perspective***

We thought it would be good, to see things from the Namibian point of view.

Statement By His Excellency Dr Hage G. Geingob On The Occasion Of The 38th Covid-19 Public Briefing On The National Response Measures  
14 December 2021

Fellow Namibians,

When the index case of COVID-19 was detected in Namibia on 13 March 2020, very few among us anticipated that 18 months later, our country would still be in this fight with a deadly enemy. Alas, we find ourselves engaged in a protracted war against this invisible enemy. In this Year of Resilience, which is now coming to a close, the devastation caused by COVID-19 in terms of lives lost and negative impacts on our socio-economic architecture has been consequential.

To date, the cumulative number of infections is currently one-hundred-and-thirty-thousand-eight-hundred-and-forty-nine (130,849). Regrettably, three-thousand-five-hundred-and-seventy-eight lives have been lost (3 578). As I have said before, one life lost due to COVID-19, is one life too many. Indeed, the devastating effects of this virus has left a void in our communities, in our families and in our hearts. It is therefore, imperative that we continue holding hands in order to avoid further loss of life and stem what is once again becoming a worrying upward trend in the infection rate.

Due to the high infection rates caused by the Omicron variant, I am told that we are now in the Fourth Wave of the pandemic. There is a rapid increase in the rate of new infections, including a moderate increase in the number of hospitalizations and deaths. Given this turn of events, it is absolutely critical that each and every Namibian should practice absolute vigilance in order for us to curtail the rate of infections.

For those of you who may wish to do so, booster shots are available as a means of bolstering your immunities. While some have already done so, we encourage the public to go for booster doses. Those who initially received AstraZeneca can get the same and also Pfizer as a booster. Pfizer is also administered to both adults and children between the ages of 12-17 years.

As I have stated before, we are part of a Global Village. Each of us, as citizens of this village are expected to act with utmost responsibility. Let us not be the ones to put ourselves and others at risk.

We cannot afford to have a situation where more vaccines, which have been acquired at great cost and effort, are left to languish until they reach expiry date. It is simply unacceptable. The Minister of Health will respond to the social media claims being made about people not being allowed to receive their boosters.

Fellow Namibians,

The facts and scientific evidence before us show that vaccination is one of the courses of action to pursue if we are serious about protecting ourselves against the spread of COVID-19, severe illness and death.

It is unfortunate to observe that vaccine uptake, which remains voluntary and based on personal responsibility in favour of the common good, has been slow. As a country, we are far from the goal of herd immunity, which we have set for ourselves several months ago. In that vein, I once again call on you to go out and get vaccinated in order to protect yourselves, your loved ones and your fellow citizens.

This is particularly important ahead of the festive season when many are likely to be around family and in close proximity with others.

For this reason, I should not plead with you to get vaccinated or to receive booster shots because it is for your own health and that of your fellow citizens. Individual responsibility is paramount in our continuing fight against COVID-19. With the current measures due to expire on 15 December 2021 at midnight, I wish to announce the following measures for the period 16 December 2021 to 15 January 2022:

1. The number of people permitted per public gathering has been adjusted from 500 to not more than 200 persons per event. This number is also applicable to people permitted at sporting events and burials.
2. The Government will not at this stage implement a curfew in order to allow for a better spread of public transportation and movement of persons. However, we encourage the correct wearing of masks in vehicles to avoid the spread of the virus.

The Government through the Ministry of Works and Transport will provide 1 million masks to public transport operators and we urge operators to insist on the correct wearing of masks by passengers.

3. Trading hours for the sale of alcohol remain unchanged but can be revisited if the rate of infections becomes overwhelming. The strict adherence to health protocols and trading hours in accordance with licensing conditions is strongly encouraged and will be enforced thoroughly, by law enforcement.

4. The validity of the PCR results will be reduced to 72 hours from the time the results are produced to the time the individual arrives in Namibia. For travelers (both Namibians and Non-Namibians) who arrive with results older than 72 hours due to delayed flights or boarding, a PCR test is to be conducted immediately upon arrival and are quarantined at own cost. The traveler will be released from quarantine if results are negative. Namibians arriving with positive PCR results, where such traveler has not completed isolation or does not present a de-isolation certificate, such traveler will be subjected to isolation at a facility nearest to the Point of Entry at own cost. Namibian citizens and permit holders may enter the country with or without 72-hour PCR test. Those who arrive without 72 hours PCR negative results will be subjected to quarantine at own cost.

5. The Government will conduct random COVID-19 testing for persons permitted entry into Namibia at Points of Entry and will carry out genome sequencing of the samples that tested positive.

This festive season will be pivotal in our fight against the COVID-19 pandemic – and we must therefore change our conduct. The virus cannot spread in the absence of specific human actions. Therefore, the actions we take and our behavioural patterns will either derail or aid our efforts to defeat COVID-19. In light of this, I urge all Namibians to avoid unnecessary travel, movement and risky behaviour during the next several weeks.

I should caution that the Government will spare no effort to place further restrictions in order to safeguard the health of our nation, which has been the first priority since the onset of COVID-19. We will therefore continue to marshal resources to fight COVID-19 and we shall do so with the same determination we have demonstrated as a Government over the past 18 months. Through better coordination and collaboration with all stakeholders we have been able to arrest the spread of the disease during the Third Wave, which lasted from May 2021 to September 2021. Our economy and health system cannot afford a deadly Fourth Wave caused by individual or collective recklessness.

Fellow Namibians,

In a few days, we will enter the festive season, which is a period of love, compassion and giving. It is a season to be thankful and a season to celebrate the joy of family, community and kinship. Let us open our hearts to one another, hold hands and ensure that we work as One Namibia and One Nation, to eradicate the scourge of COVID-19 from our homes and communities. The future of our physical and economic wellbeing depends on the actions we, as a collective, take today.

We can ill afford another dark season of high infections, illness, hospitalizations and death. Therefore, I once again reiterate individual responsibility, of which the main defense against COVID-19 is vaccination, social distancing, correct wearing of masks and hand hygiene.

Together, we have to summon the will to defeat COVID-19 by doing what is right for our fellow citizens and country. Together, we have to be resilient and summon the will to ensure we keep infections and hospitalizations low, and that we reduce the death rates to zero. Together we must ensure that through decisive and responsible action we can save jobs and protect our economy so that once more, we can restart our journey of sustainable development and prosperity.

In our fight against COVID-19, we have been able to achieve a lot through collaboration and partnership. We have done so through selfless sacrifice and dedication to collective pursuits instead of individual needs. Let us continue and not lose our zeal. We should sustain our gains and momentum. I therefore call on all of you once again to join Government in the fight against COVID-19 during the Fourth Wave of the Pandemic. Together, we can surmount the pandemic and enter into a new dawn of hope, opportunity and countless possibilities.

I thank you.

## Update on plans for Covid-19 isolation beds at Otjimanangombe Primary Healthcare Clinic



In our last newsletter we reported that the Epukiro Constituency councillors were planning to put twelve isolation beds in the clinic for patients suffering with Covid-19. With the idea that if their situation worsened they would be transferred to Gobabis Hospital. The councillors have done this under their own initiative and have launched an appeal for funds and equipment as the Ministry of Health do not have the finance to support this. In October, the beds and mattresses arrived as shown in the photos on the left. So far no Covid-19 patients have been admitted.

## ***Cold room installed in Eiseb Hostel kitchen***

In October 2016, the Foundation completed the construction of a large covered dining area and kitchen at Eiseb Primary School and Hostel. The school has now taken the initiative to convert a storeroom in the kitchen into a cold room to keep food fresh. This of course would not have happened if we had not built the kitchen in the first place.



The school secretary, Ngero Tjitunga, underneath one of the air conditioning cooling units and by the door of the new cold room.

## ***St Mary's Senior School for Girls***

As previously reported the pupils of St Mary's Senior School for Girls in Colchester decided that they would like to raise funds to buy the children of Good Hope Primary School in the village of Okovimburu in the Omaheke region of Namibia, each a school uniform. The final round of fundraising took place January resulting in £2,243 being raised. A total of £6,016 was then transferred to the Primary school to buy uniforms for 500 children. Below are some of the class photos of the children in their new uniforms.



## ***The British High Commissioner visits Otjimanangombe***

On November 24, His Excellency, the British High Commissioner, Mr Charles Moore visited Otjimanangombe to see for himself the Foundation's projects. Firstly, he toured Omuhaturua Primary School and Hostel and then went on to see the clinic. Below is an extract from his email that he sent on return to Windhoek.

'On to Otjimanangombe. I was so impressed by the school, and the clinic. I could feel the years of hard work that you have invested into developing the school, and into building the clinic and housing. It's a fantastic environment, providing educational and medical services that would otherwise be unavailable for 60kms in any direction. The community in Otjimanangombe is so very lucky to have received so much of your time and support, including from a distance over the past 18 months. I saw the foundation stones for the new school/community hall, which look rather sad and lonely waiting for something to be put on them. It's a big area, and I can see what a massive difference it would make. The kitchen and all the dormitories were incredibly clean and tidy, and the children well-fed and happy. A real pleasure to see.

I met all those you mentioned – Steve (whose pupils sang me a delightful song on my arrival), Sister Tomas (who struck me as the very essence of serenity and calmness, operating singly in a potentially very challenging environment), and Bob (who is clearly very happy to be part of the Otjimanangombe furniture!). I really enjoyed my visit, and will return. Thank you for what you and the Foundation are doing there – it truly is magnificent, and a really great lasting tribute to Catherine, who I know would be so incredibly proud of what her parents had achieved.'

## ***The Foundation's Projects***

### **Borehole for Eiseb Primary School and Hostel**

With Namibia coming off the Red List at the beginning of October, flights and accommodation were booked by Roger and Linda to return to Namibia at the end of January 2022 for three months. During this time it was agreed with the contractor to drill the borehole in February/March. Unfortunately, due to the emergence of the Omicron variant and the subsequent placing of Namibia of the Red List, their trip had to be cancelled.

However, it was decided, that just because Linda and Roger could not be there, we would delay no longer and drilling will take place as planned. Our Namibian partner ngo will project manage the operation for us. Due to delays caused by Covid-19 and the price increase on transport costs and material prices, the cost of the borehole has increased. We are grateful to those who have donated to help us with this, including SUNI.e.v, a German charity, working in Namibia, who we have close links with.

### **The multi-purpose hall – Omuhaturua Primary School and Hostel, Otjimanangombe**

We have previously reported that work began on the hall in March 2019, and by March 2020 the foundations had been dug and the concrete plinths for the steel uprights had been put in place. Progress during this period had been slow due to the rocky nature of the ground. Then Covid-19 struck with its various lock downs and work was brought to a halt.

With lockdowns being lifted earlier this year, we had hoped that work would start again. However, it soon became obvious that our builders business had financially become a victim of Covid-19 and he could no longer carry on with the project. This is a great pity as he did such a good job building the covered dining area and kitchen at Eiseb Primary School and hostel.

We are now seeking quotes from other contractors for the work and we await their estimates. Since the original price in 2019, labour costs and material prices have risen and on receipt of the estimate, we will initiate another round of fund raising to cover this.

### **4x4 ambulance for Otjimanangombe Primary Healthcare Clinic**

Although fully funded, this project is held up waiting for the Ministry of Health to approve a budget to provide a driver and paramedic to staff the ambulance.

It is Linda and Rogers intention to meet with the Executive director and possibly the Minister of Health during their next visit to try and gain approval.

We will continue to lobby the Ministry through the British High Commissioner in Windhoek and the Namibian High Commissioner in London. We are currently getting the quotation updated and confirming the lead time for delivery.

### ***Donating knitted items***

The ladies of Mersea Island and the surrounding local community continue to knit blankets, hats and jumpers for the Foundation. With no way of getting them to Namibia at the moment, we have been looking for other needy causes to donate them to. In the last newsletter we described donating them to the Afghan refugees. Since then we have donated a number of items for shipment to Moldova which is a very poor eastern European country.

A couple of weeks ago we were visited by Gillian Donovan Buck to collect some items, and here she describes what happened to them

#### **Knits Galore! Many many thanks!**

What fabulous knitwear and blankets. A kaleidoscope of colour! What to do with so many Infant-sized jumpers, also hats, mittens, headbands etc etc.

Roger and Linda graciously suggested I selected some to take back to the Southend on Sea area. You may be pleased to know that I have distributed them to a number of charities including Samaritan's Purse (Christmas Shoeboxes) where they will be transported to parts of Eastern Europe. Here, many of the children who receive a box will delight in the contents ( typically coloured pencils, drawing paper, plastic ball, hair band for girls, toy car for boys and so on) which will now include one of these knitted item! For many children this will be their sole present on Christmas Day. Of course, only the small items could fit in a regular shoebox.

So, Storehouse Southend ( A Food Bank Plus Plus!) have happily taken some items. They meet with Mums and toddlers on a weekly basis. Items were gratefully received. Their response: "What A Blessing xxxxxxxx Thank you SO much"

Thanks to Roger and Linda for these gifts. They have enhanced the work of other charities this year and more importantly enriched lives of needy folk.

Indeed, THANKS TO ALL THE WONDERFUL KNITTERS. Please keep being creative. It's given our Knit N Natter Group some healthy competition!

### ***Fundraising***

## Virgin Virtual London Marathon 2021

On Sunday 3 October while 50,000 runners were running the London Marathon, the Foundation had three runners taking part in the Virtual version. Hayley Gladwell ran around Mersea and clocked up a time of 5 hrs 30 mins and raised around £1,000 in the process. Unfortunately, Wendy Hobbs had to quarantine on the race day as her husband had Covid-19, so she ran a few days later in Colchester with a time of 5 hrs 37 mins and she has currently raised £1,533. Nigel Eden ran a course around Colchester in a time of 4 hrs 54 mins, at the time of going to press we do not have his figure raised. The Foundation would like to thank their runners for their brilliant performance and those who sponsored them. All the monies raised will go to the Foundation's projects in Namibia.



Top left: Hayley Gladwell. Top right: Nigel Eden. Bottom: Wendy Hobbs



## ***Shop collections***

We have carried out further shop collections at the following:

oodbridge Co-op: £226.56.

Stanway Co-op: £298.65

Felixstowe Co-op: £207.56

Frinton Triangle: £186.09

West Mersea Co-op: £268.54

A big thank you to Nicky, Elish, Pat, Sandra, Shirley and Mike for their help. Our last collection for this year will be at West Mersea Tesco on Saturday 18 December.

In addition we joined the Round the Island Yard sale on Sunday 29 August and raised £178.46

## ***West Mersea lights up***

After a two year break due to Covid-19, West Mersea Lights Up was back, bigger and better as an all day event on Saturday 4 December. The Foundation called on its cake bakers who provided some scrumptious homemade cakes to be sold on its stall. The day raised a total of £373 for the Foundations Namibia projects. A huge thank you to everyone who made cakes.

## ***Wix Christmas Fayre***

On Sunday 5 December, we attended Wix Christmas Fayre with our sales stall, selling knitted items, calendars and cards where we raised £79.



West Mersea Lights Up.



Wix Christmas Fayre

## ***Carols at the Pub***

On Tuesday 14 December, we joined the ladies from East Mersea Church choir and customers at the Dog and Pheasant at East Mersea for carol singing. Because of Covid-19 it was decided to sing just outside the pub under the lamplight which made for a lovely atmosphere. Thanks to generosity of the customers the landlord and landlady of the pub, we raised £190.80 for our projects in Namibia. A big thank you to Peter Inson who arranged it all

## ***Virginmoneygiving***

This fund raising site closed at the end of November 2021. We have replaced this with 'justgiving' and you can donate through its portal on our 'donation's page on our website. Thanks to Tony Millat for making this such a smooth transition.

## ***Forthcoming Events***

We have the following events scheduled:

*May Bank Holiday Saturday 28 May 2022*

Shop collection – West Mersea Co-op

*Saturday 4 June 2022*

Shop collection – Halstead Co-op

*Saturday 11 June 2022*

Shop collection – Felixstowe Co-op

*Saturday 23 July 2022*

Shop collection – Stanway Co-op

*Saturday 30 July 2022*

Shop collection – Manningtree Co-op

*Saturday 13 August 2022*

Shop collection – Brightlingsea Co-op

*Saturday 20 August*

Lions Summer Fair – china smashing

*Saturday 27 August 2022*

Shop collection – Woodbridge Co-op

*Saturday 10 December 2022*

Shop collection – West Mersea Co-op

## ***Donations***

In common with other charities, the Catherine Bullen Foundation to restrict its fundraising activities during the period of Government Covid19 restrictions. Although these have now eased, many events that we would have attended or organised, remain cancelled

## ***Donations (continued)***

It would be very much appreciated, if you feel you could support us with a donation for our projects in Namibia. As we are a UK charity working overseas we are not eligible for any British Government grants.

It can be made on line on our website [www.namibia-aid.org.uk](http://www.namibia-aid.org.uk) through 'justgiving' or 'Paypal'.

By sending a cheque made out to the Foundation to 15 Colchester Road, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex, CO5 8RS

Or you can donate by bank transfer to:

Account Name: The Catherine Bullen Foundation

Sort Code: 20-22-67

Account No: 53717690

Thank you and stay safe.

## ***Regular giving***

Some of our donors have made a more formal arrangement by setting up a standing order to donate a regular monthly or yearly sum. For which we are extremely grateful. If you would like to support us in this way, please use the above banking details so that you can set it up.

## ***Presentations***

The Foundation is pleased to give presentations to groups and clubs on its work during the day or evenings.

## ***Make a difference!***

The Catherine Bullen Foundation is working with local communities to help build and nurture a new life for the people in rural Namibia. Because we are a small charity, our overheads are small and are personally covered by the trustees, so that every single penny donated to us goes to the intended project, with spending strictly monitored by the UK trustees and their ngo partner in Namibia. All visits to Namibia are self-financed and no charitable funds are used for this purpose. Please help us make a difference by making a donation, either on line at [www.namibia-aid.org.uk](http://www.namibia-aid.org.uk) or sending it to the address below.

## ***How to contact us***

By Email: [info@namibia-aid.org.uk](mailto:info@namibia-aid.org.uk)

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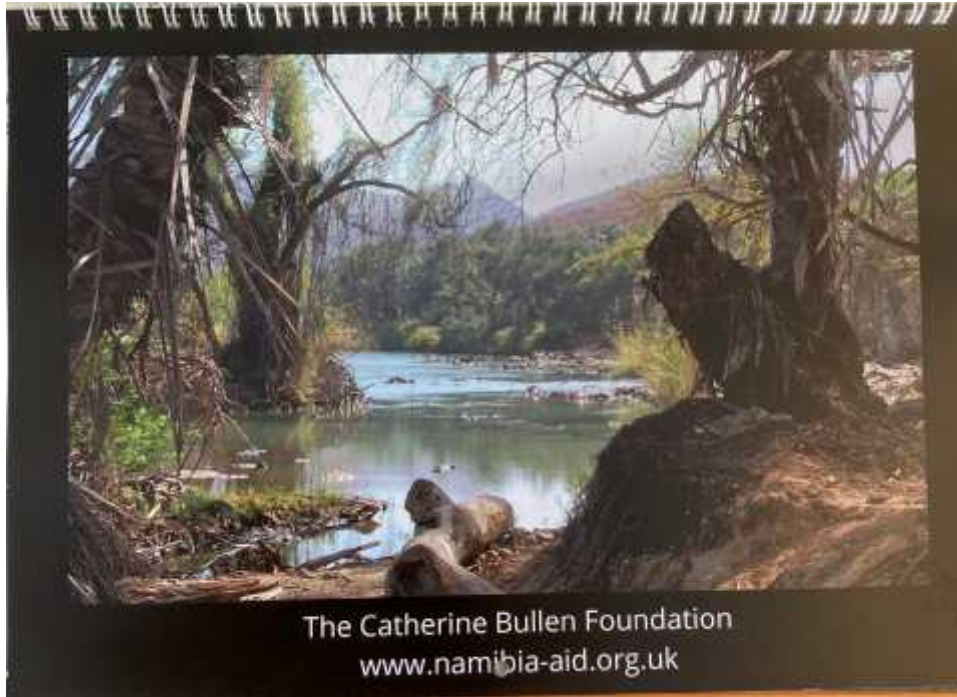
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(Photo: Chrissie Westgate)

*Roger and Linda Bullen  
and the  
Catherine Bullen Foundation  
wish you a happy Xmas and prosperous New Year*



**Available now our 2022 Calendar – Price: £10 plus £1.50 postage and packing**

## **Donation/Gift Aid Declaration**

(The Catherine Bullen Foundation – Registered Charity No. 1110516)

### **Details of donor**

**Title..... Forename(s).....Surname.....**

**Address.....**

.....

.....

**Post Code.....**

**Signature.....**

**Date.....**

I want the charity to treat

\*the enclosed donation of £..... as a Gift Aid donation

\*the donation(s) of £..... which I made on .../.../... as (a) Gift Aid donation(s)

*\*delete as appropriate*

**You must pay an amount of Income and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on your donations in the appropriate tax year.  
(currently 25p for each £1 you give).**