



# Sunshine Foundation Romania Trust

Registered charity NIC 105446

Annual report 1 January – 31 December 2019



Sunshine Foundation Romania Trust (SFR) is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. It was established as a Trust on 22 November, 2001 and is governed by a board of trustees in accordance with its trust deed.

## **Trustees**

Aodh O’Loan, Denise Copeland (Secretary), Maire O’Loan, Marie Williams (Chair), Mary Duffy (Assistant Treasurer), Nodlaig Keenan (Treasurer), Ryan Williams (appointed 15 May 2020).

## **Purposes overview**

SFR aims to significantly improve the lives and living conditions of children who were abandoned by their birth families into oppressive and poorly managed orphanages in Brasov County, Romania.

Since 2002, we have built three homes - Casa St Maria, Casa St Patrick and Casa Irlanda (see page 27 for more detail) - for just over 30 children who previously lived in overcrowded buildings, were rarely allowed to go outside and rarely had any visitors.

This work is enabled through our Romanian sister charity Fundatia Sunshine Romania.

## **Public benefit Statement**

The trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission’s guidance on public benefit. The trustees are confident that SFR’s charitable work is in accordance with the regulations on public benefit.

In 2019 we continued to ensure the development of the children and young adults in our homes and supported living apartments, most of whom have special needs. This report highlights some of our main achievements in this period.

## Casa St Maria



These two wee besties above started school in September. Costi and Stefan, below, are both enjoying high school along with all the other older children in the house



## Casa St Patrick

Casa St Patrick was re-designated from a children's home to an adult's home at the end of last year as we needed more adult accommodation. While this is good news in the long term unfortunately it meant that four of our under-18 year old boys had to be moved to different children's homes.

While out visiting in the summer, we visited Nico and Eugene and took them out for lunch. They were staying in Bradet for the summer, but they are both looking forward to moving back to Casa Patrick when they are 18 years old. Naturally, they miss their Sunshine home and their Sunshine family.



We also met up with Vali who was living with a foster mother and was happy in his new home. Rosvan is also happy in his new vocational school. Viorel keeps in good contact with all the boys.



Above: Alexandria, Lili, Danutza and Lucie happy chillin' in the yard  
Below: Casas Irlanda and Patrick heading out for a pizza to celebrate Iulian's birthday.



## Supported living

Our young adults who live in Casa Irlanda and Casa Patrick love the freedom of semi independent living, they take it in turns to do their own cooking and cleaning, with everyone playing their part, regardless of ability. They tend to the organic vegetable garden a couple of times a day.



Adriana has had such an eventful year...she has moved out of Casa Irlanda and is now engaged.

She is still working hard at the local pizzeria. Adriana's success is testament to the help that SFR has given her.

Irina misses her so much but Adriana visits very often and everyone loves to see her when she come to visit on her bike.



There's a great buzz in the early evening as all our young adults take time to exercise in the yard. Irina and Alexandria start working-out after the afternoon siesta...I'm not sure that Vali joins in every evening! Danuta is close by practising her dancing...



Meanwhile Iulian is down watering the vegetables

## Supported employment

Danuta keeps the shop well stocked and maintained, she is still very happy working there fulltime. Some of our young adults were working in a local shoe factory and some for a cleaning company.



When not working outside, Viorel also encourages the young adults to help out with DIY at the house and maintain the vegetable garden.

## Volunteers to Romania

Thank you to all of the volunteers who have travelled out to Romania to carry out DIY work and spend quality time with our children and young adults in Romania. This year, the Beragh support group got stuck into the painting among other things...



Where would we be without our foreman Bebe keeping us right and making sure ALL those wee jobs get done! Marti was so eager to get painting and was delighted with himself after painting this bench all by himself.





Fionnuala gets the guitar out and everyone is ready for a singsong and a dance and of course a sugarfest!





The group brought out a lot of nice clothes from the jumble sale and had a 'find the dress that fits evening' which the older girls love. This year Alexandria and Ionella joined in for the first time and they both loved the fun of dressing up.



## **Luci - Remembering Lucian Pirosca, 16.08.1995 – 11.01.2020**

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the passing of one of our young people, known to us all as Luci. Luci lost his battle with a long term health condition of scoliosis of the spine in January.

We rescued Luci from the orphanage at the age of twelve and his home and family from then on was Casa St Patrick with the other children who came with him from the orphanage.



Luci was a lovely, content, quiet, shy young man who loved his new home. Despite his many health problems and often being in pain and discomfort, he always greeted you with a lovely shy smile.

While we all mourn his passing, we take comfort from knowing that he had a much better quality of life during the short number of years he lived in our Sunshine house. He passed away after a deterioration in his condition among his friends and "family" Luci was laid to rest in the village of Harman which he had come to consider home

## **Financial support in Romania**

Sunshine Foundation Romania's work is also greatly supported by other charities working in Brasov County in Romania who contribute to our sister charity Fundatia Sunshine Romania.

Special thanks to the continued financial support from The Eileen Moreland Foundation and School Aid Romania including St Patrick's College, Maghera; Methodist College, Belfast; Cookstown High School and St Patrick's College, Armagh; St Patrick's High School, Keady.

Many thanks also to Helpende Handen and Onze-Lieve - Vrouwecollege from Belgium for their continued generosity and support and to the Sunshine Foundation fundraising support group in Beragh.

## **Co-ordinating our work in Romania**



A special word of thanks to Viorel, our project manager in Romania who ensures that the work of SFR is maintained and developed.

We are forever grateful to Viorel for his dedication and commitment to SFR and the many other charities that he engages with on behalf of Fundatia Sunshine Romania.

## **Fundraising**

Sincere thanks to all of our donors for their continued support and to all of the volunteers who have helped us fundraise. Many thanks also to all of the local charities, churches, sporting organisations, schools and businesses which helped to make the following fundraising activities (pictured) a success.

### **The Big Breakfast**

St Oliver Plunketts' PS, Beragh held a breakfast fundraiser at the school in March and raised £400.



### **Belfast City Marathon – 8 mile walk**

Sean walks for us again! Thanks to all his friends and the cafes and homes that have helped him raise £137.



**Belfast city marathon – The ‘NICVA and friends’ relay team raised £1,710 from sponsorship, well done to all the runners!**





**Bargains galore at the Jumble Sale in Beragh. Thanks to all the volunteers including the bakers...£2,780 raised**



**Ryan and Dougie's intercontinental 'Swim for Vali' raised £4,700**



**Cushendall Golf Club Ladies Branch recognised SFR as its charity of the year and raised £1,670**





**B&M Bargains December Bag Pack, Ballymena**





**The Glenravel crew raised £2,500 from the backpack**



## **Financial scrutiny**

Many thanks to Enda McLernon for carrying out the independent examination of the annual accounts. His continued support and advice is very much appreciated.

Thanks also to Nodlaig, our treasurer for the financial analysis of the income and expenditure in Romania and the work on keeping our gift aid claims up to date.

## **Financial review**

During the year the total income was £21,215 (2018: £13,790) Expenditure was £14,405 (2018: £24,445).

## **Reserves**

The trustees have calculated that the charity needs to maintain Reserves of ten months running costs which are unrestricted reserves, not invested in fixed assets and available for general use. In 2020 the impact of Covid has had a severe impact on fundraising and the reserves may also be used to cover this shortfall if necessary.

## **Gift Aid**

Sunshine Foundation Romania is recognised as a charity for tax purposes with HMRC and as such claims back gift aid on all eligible donations from UK taxpayers. This means that for every £1 that is gift aided, the charity can claim an additional 25p from HMRC.

## **Charitable Purposes**

“The Charity is established for the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare for education, recreation and other leisure-time occupation of people who are in need as a result of their youth, age, disability, infirmity or social and economic circumstances and in particular with the aims and objects of improving the enjoyment and quality of life of children with

special needs in Barza Mica and to provide an organisational structure to raise funds for such purpose and to properly account to donors for same."

In June, 2016 the trustees submitted a cy-pres scheme to the Charity Commission to request a change to our charitable purposes to make it clearer what the current focus of our work is including supported living. The Charity Commission approved the revised purposes but a further change was requested by the Trustees. The Commission is still considering this request after seeking further information on our current activities.

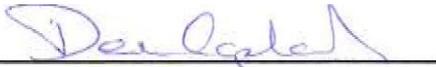
### **Governance in Romania**

The Project Manager from Fundatia Sunshine Romania, Viorel sends monthly reports to the trustees in NI. He also oversees the running of the Shop as well as liaising with all the charities that support our work in Romania.

One of the trustees volunteered on a trip to Romania in July and all of the trustees have had a full planning and review meeting with the co-ordinator from Fundatia Sunshine Romania in Belfast.

### **Declaration**

The trustees annual report was approved on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

Denise Copeland (Honorary Secretary) 

Registered charity address: C/o Marie Williams, Quarry Lodge,  
7A Corcreevy Rd, Richhill, Co Armagh, BT61 9JR

## **The Sunshine Foundation Romania Properties**

Sunshine Foundation Romania Trust established a Romanian charity called Fundatia Sunshine Romania in 2002 so that it could purchase its first house in Brasov city. This first house, Casa St Maria, was converted into a residential home for the children rescued from Barza Mica orphanage.

A further property was purchased the next year in the town of Harman not far outside of the city. A second home, Casa St Patrick, was built the following year from a timber frame structure donated from N.Ireland.

A few years later, Casa Irlanda was built in Harman to accommodate two self-contained apartments for the first of our young adults who were being moved from Casa St Maria.

Many teams of volunteers travelled out from N.Ireland to work on all three houses including both skilled tradesmen to carry out their craft and willing volunteers to paint and do whatever else needed doing.

The original homestead was converted into a shop, storeroom and an office. With the help of a seeding grant from Lloyds TSB Foundation, we established a second hand shop to sell donated items sent out mostly from Ireland.

Unfortunately, there is no such thing as a 'charity shop' in Romania so this had to be established as a separate business, having to comply with the same regulations as any other private sector business in Romania.

All properties are held in trust by our Romanian sister charity – Fundatia Sunshine Romania. Two of our founder trustees, Marie and Mary are also trustees of this charity.

Fundatia Sunshine Romania is fully registered as a charity with the Romanian authorities.

**If you would like to help Sunshine Foundation Romania, there are several ways to do this:**

**Volunteer** – hold a fundraising activity to raise money for SFR or volunteer to work with our children and young adults in Harman.

**Text Message** - Donations can be made in the following amounts; £1, £2, £3, £4, £5, £10. To donate all you have to do is text SFRM00 (followed by the amount) to 70070.

**On Line** -You can donate securely online via our online fundraising platform provider. To make an online donation visit our website.

**Standing Order** - Make a regular donation by completing a standing order form at your bank with your account details and SFR's account details:

Ulster Bank  
English Street  
ARMAGH

Account No 48043098

Sort Code 98-01-90



If you would like more information on our charitable work please visit our website [www.sunshine-foundation.com](http://www.sunshine-foundation.com) or email [info@sunshine-foundation.com](mailto:info@sunshine-foundation.com) or contact any of our Trustees listed in our SFR Committee webpage.

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