



# Lions Clubs International

## MD105 British Isles

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Dear Lions

17.02.2023

*On the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022 Russia invaded Ukraine!*

*Many of us may have believed that the Russian troops would spread rapidly across Ukraine and the invasion would be swift. What none of us, including Russia expected was the incredible resilience of the Ukrainian people under the leadership of their President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.*

*Upon hearing this, German Lion Philipp Blobel and his wife, now Lion Natalija temporarily shut down their consultancy business and set off to Ukraine to deliver aid and bring back refugees. Your current Council first heard about this at International Convention in Montreal, where Philipp was one of the keynote speakers, who gave a heartfelt speech about their work so far, see YouTube link below.*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHqZ\\_CvK4ag&ab\\_channel=LionsClubsInternational](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHqZ_CvK4ag&ab_channel=LionsClubsInternational)

*Fast forward to Europa Forum in Zagreb, October 2022. Lion Philipp was in attendance to ask for help! Following his six visits to Ukraine delivering aid and bringing Ukrainian refugees back to the safety of Germany, Philipp was contacted by the Mayor of Mykolaiv. This city, located on the banks of the Southern Bug River near the Black Sea had been under attack as part of the southern offensive since 26<sup>th</sup> February. Ukrainian forces continued to defend the city and eventually repelled the Russians in March. However, the city continued to be attacked by air strikes and much of the infrastructure has been destroyed, including the water supply. This vibrant city of museums, restaurants, shops, businesses etc is in tatters.*

*At the time, Lion Philipp was asked by the Mayor of Mykolaiv to provide between 50-80 small desalination plants, and this is what I first shared with our Multiple District Council of Governors. At the same time, Lion Philipp also secured funding from a Ukrainian charity in Augsburg where he lives. With this money he and his team purchased and had installed a large desalination plant in a hospital in Mykolaiv. On their 7<sup>th</sup> mission they visited this installation (see photographs overleaf). This proof of concept shows that the Ukrainians have the skills and resources to install, power and maintain this equipment. Although, this was at a cost much higher than the estimated \$3,000, it can, however, provide far larger volumes of safe drinking water.*

*As can be imagined, this is still an active war zone and the situation in Ukraine is very fluid and since this first request was made Mykolaiv is experiencing far fewer attacks and hence the requirements have changed, with the mayor now asking for 10 larger units to be installed, split across 3 locations. It is also worth remembering that Lions are not the only organisation supporting these needs.*

*A dedicated team of supporting Lions including DG Oksana Artemenko and PDG Valentin Kravchenko from Ukraine are in constant communication with Lion Philipp and now drafted an LCIF grant application for just over \$200,000. This will be sufficient to fund the 10 units describes above, including water storage and distribution systems and 20 generators to power the various units.*

### Support so far.

*Our amazing Lions from across our Multiple District have, as usual stepped up to the plate and have donated over £11,000 so far into our Multiple District Foundation and we are aware of other sums donating into District accounts. It is appreciated that this was originally donated based on purchasing specific equipment at specific costs, and that this may not now be the preferred option. Therefore, it is suggested that this money donated so far be ring fenced until a suitable opportunity arises for the installation of more Osmosis units. Unless those clubs and/or individuals that have donated so far say otherwise.*

*If this is the case, please contact us in writing to either return your donation, retain your donation for osmosis units or release your donation for other projects in Ukraine.*

*You can reply by email to my email address [chrishibbert@lionsclubs.co.uk](mailto:chrishibbert@lionsclubs.co.uk)*

## LCIF Support

*This request does not take anything away from the great support provided by Lions, through LCIF but is intended to provide a fund for relatively small projects needing rapid deployment. Its use doesn't necessarily have to be limited to supporting those projects currently identified. As the situation in Ukraine continues to evolve so too does our response to it.*

*The page overleaf shows a few photos from Lion Philipp and his brave team's recent visit to the city of Kherson where they delivered medical equipment and food, whilst there the city was attacked three times. The team then travelled back to Mykolaiv to visit the hospital where their first desalination plant has been installed and is now providing safe, clean drinking water to the staff and patients.*

## Ongoing support

*Since the situation is changing daily it is asked that any future money raised, be used in a more flexible way. For example, to provide food, clothing, additional generators, medical supplies, first aid equipment, water purification tablets or even more osmosis units as and when requested.*

*Lion Philipp doesn't only work in this geographical area, in fact he and his team have just returned from their 10<sup>th</sup> mission in 12 months providing aid to help premature babies in Czernowitz.*

*The projects, led by Lion Philipp Blobel, that this appeal was originally intended to support, have and continue to generate significant interest resulting in a number of personal donations being made directly to the Lions Club of Augsburg. These have included Lions in our Multiple District, ongoing support from D133 Ireland, a sizable donation from The Stock Exchange Veterans and even a \$25,000 pledge from a major donor.*

*If you would like to donate to this on-going vital project please donate through your District Treasurers- please reference your donation UKRAINE RELIEF and add your Club name*

*Please act now – Where There's a Need there's a Lion – Be that Lion. Thanks You.*

*Yours in Lionism  
DG Lion Chris Hibbert  
for and on behalf of Council of Governors 2022-23  
Email: [chrishibbert@lionsclubs.co.uk](mailto:chrishibbert@lionsclubs.co.uk)*





Figure 1 Residents queuing to fill water containers



Figure 2: Lion Philipp Blobel proudly showing the world our first desalination plant.



Figure 3: Image of first desalination plant, installed and operational in a hospital in Mykolaiv.

#LionsGetInvolved

