

CHANGED LIVES

A Mustard Seed Jersey project working with Asociata Vieti Schimbata
(name means Association for Changed Lives, referred to as AVS)

CHANGED LIVES project assists those who are homeless in the Bihor county of Romania, offering accommodation and the opportunity to change their lives for the better – depending of course on the resources available.

As of early 2020 approx 20 previously homeless people live on the site in converted trailers, porter-cabins, all trailers and porter-cabins funded by Jersey. All the Changed Lives residents work hard to be as self-sufficient as possible; any not willing to co-operate are asked to leave. For some it is a transit home and they then move on to full independence, for others with health or age or mental health issues we believe it will be a home for life.

HOW IT STARTED



On December 2 2014 the Benedek family's house demolished by a truck.



February 2015: they moved into this portercabin thanks to the generosity of the Jersey public. The Benedek family was amazed – they said “this is incredible” ... “A gift from God”

Update in July 2015:

On this site in Cihei Romania there are now 2 pensioners and 1 family living in Mustard Seed Jersey’s old converted aid trailer and 2 porter-cabins with the Benedek family and 2 single elderly pensioners.

BUT in the spring we discovered a porter-cabin is not a suitable address for a permanent ID card. All they can receive is a temporary ID card and that has implications for medical benefits, pensions, legal employment, etc.

We hope to raise funds to build a permanent structure on the site, which will include 2 accommodation units, storage area and communal showers and washing facilities.

In 2015 we calculated the cost of materials and specialist work to be £40,000 at present prices.

Update December 2019:



The Changed Lives Project has blossomed – there are now 2 converted aid trailers offering 4 units of accommodation. Also on the site are a further 3 porter-cabins all offering accommodation to those who previously were homeless. All accommodation units have a small amount of land to use to grow vegetables, raise chickens, rabbits etc in an aim to be self sufficient.

Little by little as funding allowed, the bucket / “hole in the ground” toilets have been replaced. The new building is not yet fully completed but can now be partly used. More funding would be much appreciated on that! The unforeseen poorer exchange rate and increase in Romanian prices following the Brexit decision affected us tremendously meaning our budget just wasn’t enough.



Inside one of the converted aid trailers

Nelu the director of the AVS arranged funding to purchase adjoining land. The hope and prayer is to add agricultural tunnels so the residents have sheltered employment opportunities and it is hoped that sales of produce would mean self sufficiency. Many of those living in trailer or porter cabins have health issues meaning it is almost impossible for them to obtain full-time employment, but all are desperate to work (even if only part-time) and to somehow become self sufficient.

Mustard Seed Jersey Appeal Account
Sort Code 40-25-41
Account No 71135333 Please add reference CHANGED LIVES
OR cheques payable to Mustard Seed Jersey Appeal, sent to Mustard Seed Jersey, Cardiff
House, Coin Varin,
St Peter, Jersey JE3 7EJ with covering note that this is for the Changed Lives Building Project
please