

Bellary Bulletin

December 2016



Introduction

Welcome to this edition of the Bulletin which we hope you will find interesting.

In August we provided a recap and some of the background to the work we have been involved in since we started in 2002. With two Trustees just having returned from a visit to Bellary, the main purpose of this edition is share something of that visit with you.

Bellary Visit

Trustees Peter Gibson and Terry Wilcox plus Lis Wilcox made the visit. Once again it was very fruitful and worthwhile – keeping in touch with all that is happening and also strengthening the partnership.

We managed to cram a lot into just one week, whilst at the same time experiencing the massive cultural contrasts that India presents. Fortunately, all three of us escaped sickness and other “challenges”!

The visit started by car from Goa to Dharwad where we met with the Bishop and diocesan officials, then we continued on for a further 7 hours by train to Bellary.

Once there we visited all the projects we have been involved in over the years, plus others being run by the CSI. As on other occasions, this involved many impromptu ceremonies and speeches, plus great dancing, singing or dramatic performances by some of the children. Their creativity and vibrancy is a joy to see.



Girls dancing at Wardlaw College

It was pleasing to visit the completed **LMS Telugu Primary school** in Bellary where we also performed a tree planting ceremony with the children.

All the work is complete and it was good to see desks etc provided by local donors.



Pupils at the newly built LMS Primary School, Bellary

Though only about 75 miles from Bellary, the journey to Kamandoddi and Halvi is a long, slow one of over 3 hours by car.

The construction work at **Kamandoddi Church** is finished and all that remains is decoration and minor finishing touches. The church is fully useable and they are arranging a dedication ceremony with the Bishop in the New Year. As shown in the photo below the area is very poor, so it is great that after 8 years of their efforts we have been able to help them with the final few steps to having their own church.



Kamandoddi church

The **Boys Home in Halvi** continues to flourish and we enjoyed the cultural performance given by the 40 boys there.

Whenever we visit Bellary we discuss specific needs with those responsible for the projects such as Dr Irvin in Halvi. He highlighted the need for new mattresses and pillows for all of the boys plus various replacements / repairs. He also talked about the idea of taking all the boys on a trip in the New Year.

The estimated cost of all the meds including the trip came to £1230.

Remarkably, we have just received gifts totaling £1250 specifically for the Halvi Home from individual supporters plus St Mark's Church in Harrogate. This is amazing provision for which we are truly grateful. Thank you!

We look forward to hearing from Dr Irvin about the trip as this will be a new experience for most of the boys who come from the very poor surrounding villages.



The Halvi Hostel Warden and some of the boys

Both in Halvi and also Bellary we received **reports of how children who had previously lived in the hostels are now progressing.**

At Halvi Boys Home we received a report on 13 recent "leavers" who have gone on to further education or jobs in a variety of fields, whilst in Bellary we met with 4 lads, two now working for a national bank (one is an assistant manager), whilst the two others are at college in Bellary studying for degrees.



The Halvi Hostel boys awaiting drama production by other boys

One of the key reasons for the visit was to discuss the **proposed project to build 18 office units**, the rents from which would ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the Halvi Boys Home.

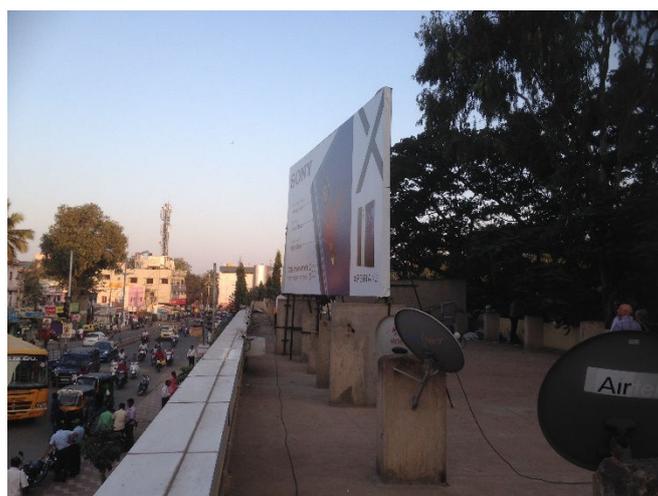
We had some good meetings with the Bishop, diocesan officials and people based in Bellary.

The stage we have now reached is that there are a number of items of information we still require. We plan to have follow-up discussions with the Bishop via Skype in the New Year. As reported in the August Bulletin, detailed plans have been drawn up and cost estimates produced, totaling just over £80,000. Provided we can sort out the outstanding matters we would hope to proceed with this project in a few months time. This is a very exciting time for the work of the BSG.



The current shops in Bellary – from street level

The photo below from the roof of the shops shows where the proposed offices will be built, overlooking what is now a bustling commercial area.



Other matters

FURTHER ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

In the last Bulletin we reported that Jenny Lewis had taken on the role of BSG Secretary - largely due to the ill-health of Colin Brown who had undertaken that role since BSG was established in 2002.

In November we welcomed Brian Skinner as a new trustee and also Treasurer. Brian has been a long-standing supporter and has also acted as Independent Examiner of our accounts each year. We are really grateful to him for his willingness and the enthusiasm he shares for the work.

Colin continues as a Trustee albeit without specific responsibilities. The process of sorting through and passing-on the many files to Jenny and Brian revealed just how much Colin has done over the years, plus the depth of his knowledge and insights which he intends to continue to share.

OPERATING POLICIES

Although we are a very small organisation, the scope of our work has expanded over the years beyond what we ever imagined! Additionally, the Charity Commission is progressively raising its expectations of charities and how they operate, therefore in response to this we have recently developed and implemented formal policies. These cover a variety of key matters such as Governance, Fundraising, Financial Controls, Feedback, "Whistle-Blowing" etc. They are available from the Trustees and will be on our website in the New Year.

ANNUAL REPORT AVAILABLE

Our Annual Report for 2015-16 is also now available on the website.

CURRENT FUNDING OF HALVI HOSTEL

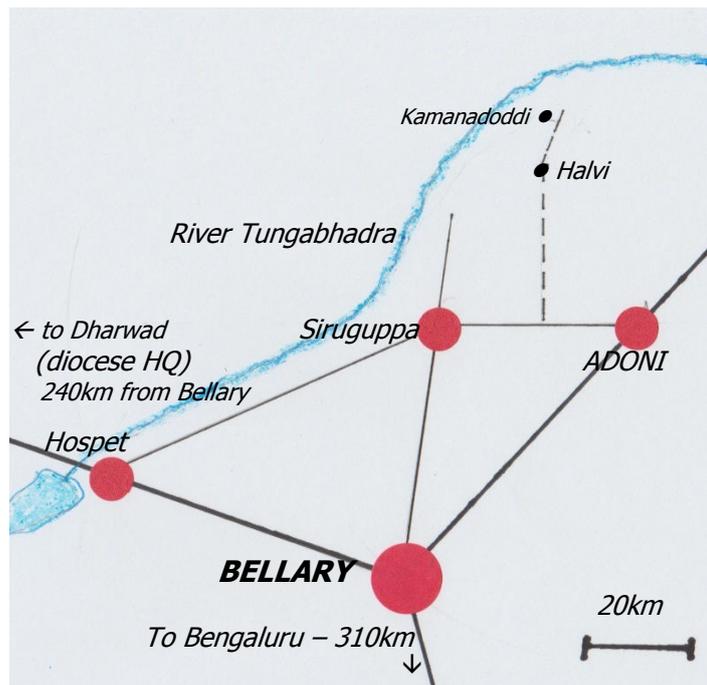
The annual budget for Halvi is 702,000 rupees – about £8,250 (£17.00 per boy per month). This has been growing gradually with inflation and exchange rate changes.



Whilst we seek to develop a long-term, sustainable funding solution for Halvi, we need more people to provide regular giving specifically for the

hostel. Please contact any of the Trustees if you feel you can help.

BELLARY AREA MAP



Bellary Support Group

REGISTERED UK CHARITY NUMBER 1095365

Trustees

Peter Gibson (Chair)

Jenny Lewis (Secretary)

Brian Skinner (Treasurer)

Colin Brown; Owen Mayes; Terry Wilcox

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*We wish you a very happy
Christmas and best wishes for 2017.*

