

Press Release

16th February 2015

Local charity man keeps on digging *Charity fundraiser brings more wells to West Africa*

A charity campaigner from Bournemouth has returned from a month-long trip around West Africa where he worked with villagers to provide them with safe, clean water.

Water charity founder Eddie Martin, 67, a Train Manager for CrossCountry, lives in West Moors but flew out to Burkina Faso in West Africa with his wife Karen in January. On the trip they visited sites where his charity, Myra's Wells, has constructed an impressive 55 wells in just eight years.

Money raised through Myra's Wells enables the construction of 60-90 metre deep wells, which supply the needs of several thousands of people in a part of the world where fresh water is scarce and the risk of the spread of disease through contaminated water is high. Returning from his trip just last week, Eddie was humbled by what he saw, saying;

"Seeing more than 50 women and children cheering and clapping by the well when we arrived at the village, Nana, was a sight I'll never forget.

"Karen and I were completely overcome with emotion when we saw the impact just one of our wells has had on an entire community. Before the well, villagers had to walk for at least five miles a day to find water. Now they thankfully no longer have to face that."

Eddie set up the charity in 2006 in memory of his late wife of 33 years who was killed in a road accident in 2005. While still grieving for his wife, a turning point for Eddie was during a trip to Burkina Faso, where he witnessed appalling living conditions for local villagers and was inspired to find a way to provide them with safe, clean water.

Eddie discovered that one well could provide unlimited water for around 4,000 people for the cost of £4,000, so as soon as he returned to the UK he wrote to his friends asking them to contribute to the building work. He actually raised £8,000 and so was able to drill two wells. The charity donations continued to flood in and so the work grew.

Eddie wants to continue with his efforts to raise money so more wells can be provided to those communities who are without easy access to clean water. "I can't thank everyone enough for their donations and I'm so grateful to CrossCountry for allowing me the time off to go on this trip - my colleagues and I hope to arrange a number of fundraising events this year as well," he said.

All the money raised for Myra's Wells goes directly towards the drilling of the wells. People wishing to support Myra's Wells or get involved in forthcoming projects can visit www.myraswells.co.uk for more information.

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For further information, please contact Kelly Mortlock or Becky Riffle on 020 7025 7522 or email crosscountry@grayling.com.

Notes to editors

The CrossCountry network is the most extensive passenger rail franchise in Britain. Stretching from Aberdeen to Penzance, Bournemouth to Manchester and from Stansted to Cardiff, it calls at over 100 stations. Based in Birmingham, CrossCountry connects seven of the Britain's 10 largest cities and delivers 295 services every weekday, equating to some 33 million passenger journeys a year.

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