

Celtic team up with

£5,000 donated to children who live in the slums of Thailand

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The Celtic Charity Fund has come in behind a local charity with a substantial donation.

The Glasgow club donated £5,000 to Kate's Project, which works in the slums of Pattaya in Thailand.

The charity was set up back in 2006 by West Belfast woman Roisin Hall and is named after the Andersonstown woman's mother, who sadly passed away five years ago. After a year spent in Thailand, Roisin and her husband set the charity up in hopes of giving a better life to the children of Pattaya.

"My husband Andrew and I took a trip to Thailand and visited the city of Pattaya," Roisin told the Andersonstown News. "We learnt that it was the sex tourist capital of the world and we were shocked to see the state in which the people lived.

"They were living in slums. The conditions in which they are living is just dreadful. Then we met kids who were being pressurised into a life of

prostitution and it was then I knew something had to be done to try and prevent this."

When Roisin returned to Belfast she realised she had to help the people of Pattaya and so began Kate's Project.

"When you meet people and you get to know them and gain their trust, it's hard to walk away," said Roisin.

"Me and Andrew decided to form a charity in aid of educating the children. We thought by starting this education project we would be giving the children a better chance in life because in areas such as Pattaya children are more likely to go into prostitution and begging.

"Now, two years on, the charity has grown from educating 20 to 150 children. We also offer adult literacy classes along with hairdressing and art and craft classes. It's just unbelievable how talented and creative they are."

Not long after returning home to Belfast from another visit to Thailand in June of this year, Kate's Project was donated a grant from Celtic's Charity Fund. Roisin said she is delighted with Celtic's involvement.

"When they chose to give us the grant I was shocked. They said we were the kind of charity they were looking for. Since then they have been an amazing supporter of our project in Thailand and just last month Paul Cuddihy, the



editor of Celtic View, ran the

West Belfast charity



CHARITABLE: Celtic Football Club have donated £5,000 to Kate's Project for the children of Pattaya in Thailand, above left, which has been set up by West Belfast woman Roisin Hall, above, in memory of her late mum

"Straight away they started to do the Celtic huddle."

Glasgow 10K race to raise much-needed funds for us. Altogether £1,460 was raised.

"On my recent visit, just a few weeks back, the Fund gave us a generous donation of 80 Celtic strips to take over with us for the children. I was just totally over the moon with that gesture.

"When I gave a ball to a group of boys, straight away they started to do the Celtic huddle. On a dull, grey day seeing all the children running about in those bright jerseys with big smiles on their faces was just priceless. It was all I could do to keep my-

self from crying."

Roisin admitted that it's hard knowing that the children's lives are in all probability mapped out for them already, but she said bringing about even the smallest change in their difficult lives is worthwhile.

"They are resilient people, although they live in unfortunate circumstances. I suppose it's fortunate they accept their lives, and although they are never going to live the lifestyle we do, our project is trying to make things a little bit better."

Jane Maguire, Head of the Celtic Charitable Foundation, said: "Celtic Charity Fund was delighted to support Kate's Project with a £5,000 donation in March 2009, as Roisin, Andrew and the rest of the team

provide wonderful assistance to children and families from the slums of Pattaya in Thailand.

"Celtic FC has also donated kit to the children and Celtic View Editor Paul Cuddihy recently ran the Men's 10K in Glasgow to raise funds for Kate's Project. He did this through the Celtic Staff Fundraising Scheme whereby funds raised were diverted through Celtic Charity Fund, supplemented by 25 per cent (before any Gift Aid calculations) and donated to Kate's Project on his behalf.

"As Celtic supporters themselves, Roisin and Andrew are wonderful ambassadors for the club and epitomise the essence of our charitable roots."