

NORFOLK AND NORWICH - EL VIEJO FRIENDSHIP LINK



Other Projects

In November 1998 Hurricane Mitch struck the border areas of Nicaragua and Honduras with devastating ferocity. Many lives were lost, homes and livelihoods were destroyed and there was serious infrastructural damage. There were some, mercifully few, deaths in El Viejo but there were many homes lost.

Arising from a visit by the Secretary early in 1999, the link agreed to assist in providing new homes for some of the victims. After a public appeal, and support from organisations, including the Norwich Branch of the United Nations Association, the Link was able to provide almost \$20,000 towards the creation of a new settlement for 42 families. The families themselves decided to name their new community 'Norwich' in recognition of the help we provided. Also, the first child to be born in the new settlement was also christened 'Norwich'. The settlement is flourishing. It has its own small primary school but the families suffer from the poverty which is endemic in the area.

Earlier, in 1997, the Link provided funds for the refurbishment of the central covered market in the city of El Viejo. The project updated and increased the number of stalls, improved health and safety, improved the public health of the market by increased standards of hygiene and provision of new electricity and water supplies.

A wide variety of other, smaller, projects have also been carried out as follows;

- Visits by people of El Viejo to Norwich and Norwich people to El Viejo
- Visit to Norwich of the El Viejo under 12 football team who took part in the Canary Cup, an international youth tournament organised by Norwich City FC.
- At various times the Link has sponsored seven Nicaraguan students to study English at the Bell School
- Consignments of medical supplies and education materials have been sent to the health centres and schools in El Viejo
- A consignment of bicycles was sent
- Material supplied to AMNLAE, the Nicaraguan Women's organisation
- Funded a water supply to a new barrio in El Viejo
- Funded re-roofing of a secondary school
- Funded irrigation equipment for a women's agricultural project
- Provided furniture for a Special School

- Provided rotating loans for women's co-operatives for a nanan growing project, two sesame seeds projects, and a mini enterprise scheme for unemployed women
- Provided funding for books for a school library
- Funded the provision of roofing materials for a small rural community.