



East Finchley man launches winter appeal to get vital aid to Ukrainians

11th October

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Michael Byrne and his team of helpers transporting critical aid to Ukraine as Putin steps up retaliation attacks (Image: Michael Byrne)



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As Putin warns of "severe retaliation" if Ukrainians attack "Russian" soil, an East Finchley man's fundraising mission has become even more acute.



Michael Bryne, **who transports aid to Ukraine**, has launched a winter appeal to raise more donations to take across and £26,000 to help with costs.

President Vladimir Putin launched a wave of strikes on Ukraine cities on Monday in response to an attack on the Kerch bridge linking Russia and

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The Russian leader warned of even more "severe retaliation" in the event of further Ukrainian attacks.

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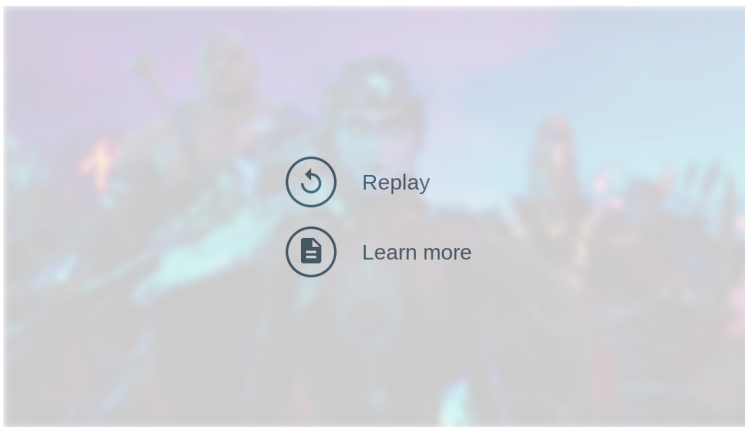


Michael poses with supplies on his fourth trip to the Ukraine border (Image: Michael Byrne)

"We need to redouble our efforts to make sure we get the aid to Ukraine," said father-of-two Michael.

"The news keeps reminding us that this war is a long way from being won on the battlefield yet. Ukraine's had some positive victories but it's a reminder there's a long way to go."

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The 55-year-old added: "It's an example of trying to cow the civilian population into changing their minds of supporting Ukraine politicians and military by striking at the heart of so many cities at one time."

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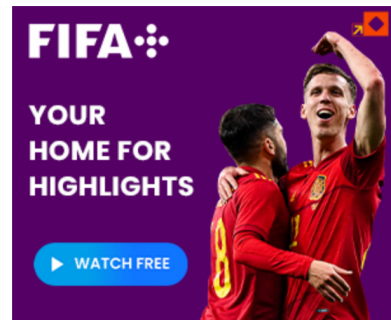
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"Doing it through rush hour into heavily populated areas, that has nothing to do with military infrastructure has it.

"I've been texting Ukrainian colleagues. They are not about to give up."

Michael has connected with a Ukrainian MP who is in the UK with her children for safety reasons, but still working, and a Ukrainian lawyer aiding the coordination effort.

The appeal needs sleeping bags, electric generators, baby food, blankets – "everything we can buy and they can't" to take across.

Michael and his team drive the aid to the border crossings where he has made a number of partnerships with NGOs.

"They have the network, they have the relationships with the Ukraine military, and they have the 4x4 vehicles," he said.

"They don't say where they are going until the aid has arrived. They don't want to tell us routes or timings or vehicles used – the Russians do and have attacked convoys."



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Michael said the cash is to pay for van rentals and fuel, and he is hoping to buy a van, so that drives can go into Ukraine to hubs where aid is taken to conflict zones.

"In the 1930s we tried to appease an aggressor and it didn't work. I don't want to see us returning to the 1930s," he said.

To donate visit drivingaidtoulkraine.org or telephone 07791 912389.

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