

# Sakari Seppälä

Sakari Seppälä is a very special friend to the charity and also to Doug Hulme, our Chief Executive.

Many of our supporters will remember him, perhaps for his presence at the House of Commons Dinners each year, where last year he gave the vote of thanks to Baroness Golding and to the charity for its good work.

Or maybe you were hosted by him on a Salmon Fishing holiday in Finland that we auction at our dinners. Sakari has raised several thousands of pounds for the charity over the years by putting up 3 nights of luxury accommodation and fully guided fishing days on one of the most productive salmon rivers in the world the Kymioki.

His help and support to the charity went much further however than even this. He, along with Sirkka Kotola, was responsible for the support that Kotka City Council have shown towards the charity over the years since our first tentative trips to Finland.

It was Sakari that organised and facilitated the lease of our cottage in Finland; a facility that has meant hundreds of children have had their lives changed by the programmes we offer at the cottage. None of our residential facilities would have taken place in the last ten years if it had not been for Sakari. Sakari is head of the Planning and Technical department of the City and as such is in the position of a deputy Mayor, which in Finland is an appointed paid position. He is amongst the most active patrons and volunteers we have.

Imagine our shock when we heard the news that Sakari had suddenly passed away on 8th October. He had become over the years a close personal friend to Doug as well as to the charity. We had many developments planned for our work in Finland, he was always so happy helping us. It hardly seems possible that he is no longer with us and at just 56 years of age, the world has been robbed of a very valuable person. His passing may also have repercussions for our work in Finland, we shall have to wait and see on that front. Sad news.. rest in peace our very good friend.