



Newsletter 3A

June 2008

At last the information that you have all been waiting for.

Following our successful recce trip to Zambia earlier this month we have now agreed on a suitable project and venue for our party. We spent most of time while in Zambia with the representatives of the Zambian Scout Association who were very useful and helpful to us during our stay. After looking at a number of possibilities for the project and the relaxation period we have decided that the best option for all parties concerned is to offer our services in the Northern Province of Zambia. This area has been overlooked for help for many years and the whole area has slowly run down. We propose to go to the Chinsali District which is about 950 kilometres north of Lusaka, the capital. There are a few problems in choosing this area but with the help of the National Scout Association the majority of these should be easily overcome.

Chinsali District lies on the watershed between the Chambeshi River in the Congo basin and the Luangwa River in the Zambezi basin. The north eastern half of the district is a relatively flat plateau at about 1200-1300 metres. The south western half has an attractive landscape of granite hills with an elevation of 1500-1600 metres which includes the country estate of Shiwa Ngandu. Within this estate there are some hot springs which may be used as a relaxation area for teams during their rest day on site.

The proposed site is a school (Yasheni Community School) for under privileged and vulnerable children in the small village of Mpyana-Bwalya within the Chinsali District. The school currently consists of two classrooms and caters for about 120 pupils in four classes. The proposal is to construct another classroom and store room with a fourth classroom if time and finances allow. All training required for this project will be given (probably as part of training weekends) over the next twelve months.



We shall be camping, and cooking on open fires, during the project within the school perimeter probably on the flat area currently part of the school's games field. We hope to have some of the local Scouts and Girls Brigade camping and working alongside our party.

The school is situated adjacent to the Lubwa Mission which was set up in 1905 by the Church of Scotland and consists of a church, hospital and government run school, all of which are now in a rather run down and derelict looking state. As a second part of our project we propose to help refurbish this area subject to available manpower and finance. Lubwa was the birth place and home of Dr Kenneth Kaunda who was Zambia's first president for about 30 years. During our visit we met Dr Kaunda who is currently the Chief Scout of Zambia. He was very interested in our project and offered to support us in any way that he can. We also visited the British High Commission and the Education Department of the Zambia Government who also gave us their support.



The other main connections with the Lubwa Mission are that this was the birth place of Scouting in Zambia and also the starting area for the Girls Brigade so it was an apt area for our consideration. While in this area we met some of the current Scouts and Girls Brigade members who were all interested in helping us for the duration of our stay in the area next year.

At present we are not 100% certain what we shall be doing for the relaxation period at the end of our expedition. This will depend on some of the negotiations that have to be finalised but it will probably involve a stay in a National Park where our members will have the opportunity to see some of the African animals in their natural environment.

The suggested dates for the project have been stated as from Saturday 18th July 2009 until Saturday 8th August 2009 depending on the availability of air flights but we may have to move these dates back one week as some of the schools in Cleveland may not finish until 21st July 2009. Our preferred means of travel is with British Airways as this is a direct flight from London Heathrow with a convenient connection from Newcastle. There is however a slight problem in so much that British Airways only currently flies on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. If the flights are the same in 2009 and we take this option it will mean that we shall have to leave Newcastle early on the Friday afternoon. As this will affect members of the team who are working it may not be a possibility. Other airlines will probably involve another change of aircraft and will also mean a longer travel time. We shall confirm this situation as soon as possible.



Further details will be passed on as soon as they are available.

Doug Corbin
Expedition Leader

