

# Gorkha Development Scheme

Health & Education in Gorkha, Nepal

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## Welcome to Issue 11 of the GDS Newsletter

### Message from the Chair

2019 was another busy year for GDS with an increased number of volunteers, increase in projects funded and a record-breaking year for fundraising which will enable more projects in the future. A massive thanks to everyone who has helped:- notably to former volunteer Fiona who, with friends help raised a fantastic £2000. Thanks also to our Gorkha committee who give their time and skills, and without which there would be no volunteers or projects to help those most in need.

Trustee Update - Congratulations to Dr Naomi Cairns, to Olivia and Mark on their engagement and Zoe on her year working in Delhi.

Linda Blunt

### Geeta returns to her hometown of Gorkha



Geeta was very involved with the Gorkha Women's Association (GWA) when Linda first visited Gorkha in 1997 and has remained a team

member ever since in both Gorkha and the UK. One of the keys to GDS success is understanding the differences in culture and Geeta and Amir help bridge that gap. They were able to attend a committee meeting on a family return visit.

Zoe spent time with the GWA discussing future programmes on health and hygiene. These visits remain essential for providing guidance, support and transparency.



### Projects funded since 2015 Earthquake

In 2015, when Zoe and Olivia first volunteered in Gorkha, a new system was introduced to help make applications for funding easier and more transparent. Within weeks the tragedy of the earthquakes in Gorkha caused such destruction that the schools needed new classrooms instead of the walls painting, so priorities changed. GDS was able to react quickly to the community needs, purchasing galvanise for emergency classrooms in 10 schools. Many of these temporary classrooms are still being used!

**£32,000 has supported 70  
projects over  
the past 5 years**



Since those first applications for galvanise and solar lamps for families with no power, we have agreed over 70 applications. These vary from £2,000 per year supporting 60 children through school and college sponsorship; regular rural programmes for children's hygiene, women's health and teacher training, each costing approx. £300 with funds also several thousand pounds made available for hospital equipment and linen. Local homestay families received £50 per week to house and feed volunteers and even more importantly, provide a family away from home and is often the highlight of the volunteer's experience.

If you would like to contact us, please visit our website [www.nepal.co.uk](http://www.nepal.co.uk) or email [lindagdsnepal@gmail.com](mailto:lindagdsnepal@gmail.com)

### **Sarah's 6 Week Medical Elective – August 2019**

Following Naomi's experience in March Sarah was aware of the difficult conditions at Gorkha hospital which was in a state of demolition following the damage from the 2015 earthquakes. However, GDS were thrilled that Sarah still wished to undertake her elective in Gorkha. Her time was split between mornings at Gorkha hospital working within the outpatient clinics, the rest of the day at the private hospital Apollo. Sarah was able to observe and take part in consultations, as well as give her opinions on management plans and possible diagnosis. All valuable experience to support her degree. She also took part in teacher training and school hygiene programmes organised by the women's group (GWA), helped with a local school scout group and immersed herself into family life and the culture of Gorkha. GDS were able to work with our sister charity GDHEDS to make this elective a success and offer thanks to Sarah for her work.



### **Fiona's Fundraising**

Former volunteer Fiona has raised over £2,000 in donations via Wonderful.org (see opposite). Fiona and Ian hosted a Nepali Evening for over 50 friends with the help of a local restaurant owner from the 'Hungry Buddha' in Sheffield. At Christmas a supportive group of friends and family made donations to GDS in lieu of giving cards raising £315 as well as donating books which will be distributed in Gorkha. GDS thanks Fiona for her continued fun and intuitive fund-raising efforts.



Trustees Linda Blunt, Naomi Cairns, Zoe Dallow, Amir and Geeta Karmacharya, Joy Leighton, Olivia Power

**TO DONATE ONLINE GO TO**

**[www.wonderful.org](http://www.wonderful.org) (search Gorkha)**

**100% of money raised goes directly to GDS  
If you are a taxpayer, you can include gift-aid  
(an additional £25p for every £1 donated!)**

### **School Hygiene Programmes become more inclusive**

The school hygiene programmes that GDS fund, are run by Sarita and Kalpana as well as others from GWA plus volunteers. They are one of the most successful programmes we support and are held in the poorest of schools in Gorkha District. They continue to improve and in the most recent programme. Teachers and Parents were also getting involved, meaning that the vital knowledge taught in these sessions can continue to be shared and passed on to improve health and hygiene in the community.



### **Talks on Nepal and Running a Charity in Nepal**

Linda continues to present talks to garden clubs, WI and other interested groups. At Billericay Probus lunch for 100 ladies, Jean helped sell plants and jams. This together with an astounding £1,000 donation from one lady, raised a total of £1600. Most evenings raise a more modest £150 - £200, which all goes to Gorkha.

### **BRANNGO**

Olivia and Zoe attended the Nepali Embassy for a BRANNGO meeting and Linda joined a workshop in October. The aim of BRANNGO is to link Nepali charities and help make connections and this is now reaping rewards with exciting news that Aidan Warlow will visit Gorkha in March. He will work with Laxman to further developing Teacher Training courses and we look forward to updates for the next newsletter.

**Interested in Volunteering, fund-raising  
or just getting involved in GDS?  
Contact us [www.nepal.co.uk](http://www.nepal.co.uk)**