



BOLLINGTON

Live!

Number Sixty Two

Winter 2014



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Back issues on line at: www.happy-valley.org.uk/live

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EDITORIAL



Welcome to issue 62 of *Bollington Live!*

As the front cover shows, with the Waterhouse Mill development, change is everywhere and Bollington is no exception. The new houses will certainly change the familiar view over the old Kay-Metzeler site and will also eventually bring new residents to the village, who will be able to enjoy all the village has to offer.

There has also been a small change here at *Bollington Live!* Issue 61 was the last issue with Anthony Holland as editor and I am sure that those of you who have been

regular readers over his eight year, twenty-four issue tenure will agree that he has done the magazine proud. I know he is looking forward to taking a well earned rest from editorial duties but I hope to see him contribute with articles and photographs in the coming issues.

So, for my first edition I thought it would be a good idea to introduce myself, some of you may know me already as the manager of Bollington Health & Leisure or have seen my name on some of the articles I have contributed to *Bollington Live!* previously.

I have been working with the magazine for a number of years now, contributing in various ways and I thought that this, my first issue, would be a good opportunity to invite some new people to do the same. You will see at the top of this page that *Bollington Live!* is 'a voice for everyone,' with the aim of promoting local concerns and as such there is no reason why you cannot get involved.

The top of the page also lists the editorial team and you will see various names at the end of each article, these are the volunteers that contribute to the magazine and they are just normal people of Bollington like you. We'd really like more people to be involved with the magazine and all you need to do to contribute is have an idea that is important and relevant to Bollington, articles are usually between just 200 and 700 words and cover a wide range of topics, which can include interviewing a local person, writing a piece on local history or highlighting an upcoming event.

There is no commitment to do anything other than you are happy

You can get involved in our magazine by emailing liveditor@happy-valley.org.uk or send a message through facebook (just look for *Bollington Live!*).

with, which might just be one article every so often, so why not get in touch and flex your creative muscles?

We'd also really like some of the younger people in the village to get involved, our regular 'Bollington By' feature gives a voice to a local teenager, but we'd also like to see contributions from younger people on a wider scale. If you know anyone that would like to write a relevant article then please point them in our direction. This isn't limited to teenagers either, there may be a parent that has something to write about the children of the village and any articles that show the cross section of Bollington people and Bollington life would be greatly accepted.

Echoing the ethos of a magazine for all, this issue has a focus on people, whether it's Bollington people volunteering around the world, people opening shops in the village, people raising money or just simply people's view of Bollington Life.

We also have stories covering the history of Bollington Hall Farmhouse, Samba music in the village, a Bollington focused poem and an article discussing the possibility of even more developments in the village, so really a mixed bag.

I am looking forward to working as the editor of *Bollington Live!* and hope that you continue to enjoy reading it and please remember your contribution is just an email away.

Steven Hurst

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7th. January
2015

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VILLAGE LIFE ELSEWHERE



Here we learn how Bollington life compares to life in villages abroad, as two local residents detail their time in Africa. Up first: Barbara Challenger in Kenya and Ghana.

Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO):
Definitely worth it!

Going overseas to work as a volunteer wasn't something I always wanted to do.

Retiring early from a job in education, I worked at a garden centre which I loved. Soon, I thought I needed another challenge. I felt I could still use my experience in education management and I also wanted to travel, so that's when I considered voluntary service overseas (VSO).

It took 18 months to go through VSO's selection and training process, while also addressing my own anxieties before I took up my first placement in Nairobi, Kenya in 2010.

As 'Education Management Adviser' I worked for the Kenyan Government in the Special Needs Education Section of the Education Service offering advice on implementing policy and strategy in Special Education Needs (SEN). I was office-bound, so sadly didn't get to visit many schools.

I helped develop a plan to make schools aware of the newly produced SEN policy which had taken 10 years to develop. Although there was a policy for SEN, there was little money to implement it and Children with SEN and disabilities struggled to survive in developing

Look out for Barbara's forthcoming e-Book about her experiences.

Proceeds of the books' sale will go to VSO.



Photographs supplied by Barbara Challenger

Above: Barbara and colleagues at the Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition

Below: Zebras in Masai Mara, Kenya

countries let alone achieve their rights to education. Culturally, some people still viewed children with disabilities as a curse and some are left to die. Accurate statistics on children with SEN and disabilities aren't available and provision for them is often non-existent and their needs are overlooked.

My second placement was 12 months in Accra, Ghana in 2012.

This time my placement was in a Non-Government Organisation: Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition. As 'Policy Simplification and Communication Officer', I worked with a small group whose aim was to put pressure on the Government to improve education for Ghanaian children. Ghana has so many education problems including: insufficient

"MY FIRST 'HOME' IN KENYA WAS SQUALID, SPARTAN, INFESTED WITH COCKROACHES AND FLOODED WHEN IT RAINED"

schools, a lack of trained teachers, girls' education, poor quality teaching, weak management, large classes, few resources and appalling toilet provision, so it's difficult to know where to start.

I worked on many tasks at GNECC including research and cataloguing Ghanaian education policies which aim to help children attend school and improve the quality of their education. Ghana has endless

policies but limited ability to implement them well.

In addition to work which I found rewarding, the experiences I had whilst doing VSO were not all comfortable and life was, often, tough. My first 'home' in Kenya was squalid, spartan, infested with cockroaches and flooded when it rained and I moved 4 times in 6 months.

Public transport was a nightmare due to congestion, clapped-out vehicles and crazy drivers, and the Ghanaian heat was unrelenting. There was no drinking water from a tap, no baths and water and power shortages were frequent. I was scammed and robbed on two separate occasions. I saw extreme poverty in the slums, juxtaposed with the extreme wealth of communities which had palatial houses with guards, servants and swimming pools.

Conversely, I made new friends, learned a lot and tested my own strength of character. I experienced different cultures, customs, ways of working and foods. I visited game reserves in Kenya, including Masai Mara and Amboseli, and spent a week on the island of Lamu on the south coast where the transport is by donkey. I saw places that moved me to tears, most notably Cape Coast Castle with its roots in the slave trade.

The experiences made me view the world from a broader perspective.

Returning to the UK after living in Africa did prove a shock to the system in reverse. I was far more appreciative of the services and material luxuries I have in Bollington - my house, car, constant power, drinking water from a tap and uninterrupted wifi. We're so fortunate to have a library, medical centre, schools, arts and other social amenities on our doorstep. There is a tendency to take so much for granted living here.

I will feel eternally grateful to VSO for enabling me to live and work, share knowledge and experiences in Kenya and Ghana.

Barbara M. Challenger.

