

Link Update - June 2022

Life, business and pleasure are beginning to get back to normal so I hope all readers are keeping well and if you like so many of us have experienced covid, I hope you have recovered and are feeling well again. The Link Committee met recently for the first time since the autumn and were able to catch up on the students from Nkokoto and to plan ahead, both in regard to the projects the Link supports and our fundraising here in Minchinhampton. We were pleased to welcome two new members on the committee, Allison Jacks and Barbara Powell.

Firstly, in Nkokoto.....

We are currently supporting 59 students. As always, the Link is sponsoring 8 students in each of the four secondary school years in Vumilia School and 6 students in each of the two years in the Urambo College (the FDC.) The FDC students are studying electrical engineering, motor vehicle maintenance, tailoring, welding and fabrication or carpentry and joinery. While at the college, they are also offered courses in computing, finance and other skills for adulthood. The cost of sponsoring the 32 secondary school students and 12 FDC students each year is £5,000. This expense is covered by income from our generous sponsors. Thank you, of course, to you all.

We have also taken on board 9 students who move away from home to complete 2 years of A level courses. The Link cannot pay for all their expenses, which includes food, lodging in dorms, tuition fees and items such as a mattress, washing equipment and health insurance, but we pay at least 70% and their parents also contribute. The final educational commitments we have are 6 students at university or college studying medical science, pharmacy (2), water engineering, local government administration and banking/finance. These students are also resident, some a very long journey away from home. All of these students will be finishing their courses in 2022 or 2023 but we are thinking about the next students.



Bikes delivered for the Nkokoto students at Vumilia School



These girls are ex-FDC students who were sponsored by the Link and have now set up their own tailoring business in Urambo designing and making the uniforms for the school students



One of the classrooms at Nkokoto Primary School

So we need to restart our fundraising. Our first event will be on Saturday June 11th in the Market House; a musical evening with Becky Dellow and Jeff Gillett. Funds will be used to buy bikes for the 50 Nkokoto children who start school at Vumilia every year. Being able to cycle to school daily means that the children, particularly the girls, have a safer journey and they arrive at school better able to learn. Our second event is the Eddystone Pursuit on June 18th; Alison Kennedy and Chris Anders are asking for your sponsorship; the Eleanor Creek Foundation supports this event and the more money that they raise, the more prize money they will receive; the prize fund is £30,000 split between approx 70 boats that all enter for their chosen charity. Details for both events are published on the website; link below.

And now, in Minchinhampton.....

The Link has also agreed in principle to further promote and develop the link through a shared cultural arts project that celebrates the heritage and traditions of both our communities. We are very excited about the ideas behind this project which will involve planned performances of expressive/creative arts using local artists and performers with dance, songs, stories, drama and the visual arts, both here and in Nkokoto. Really exciting stuff!!

A date has also been fixed for our AGM This will be on Wednesday September 7th, venue and guest speaker to be confirmed. More details will be available in July or August.

Don't forget to keep up to date with our website : “minchinhamptonnkokotolink.co.uk”

With best wishes to everyone,

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