



"The Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed"

Open Kingdom

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Saturday 30th May 2009

2.00 - 4.00pm

Norfolk Park Heritage Centre

Sheffield

1. Welcome, Thanks & Introduction

Present:

Vic & Di Whittaker, Christine Tooze, Tina Tomlinson, Jeremy & Anne Thornton

Apologies for absence:

Paolo Altamura, Isaac & Natalie Randall, Fiona D'Arcy, Barry Manson, Carole Davies, Louise Evans, Anne Saxton.

2. Minutes of last AGM

The minutes of the previous AGM were read and agreed – proposed by Diane Whittaker and seconded by Vic Whittaker.

3. Annual Reports:

2.1 Chair's Report – Vic Whittaker presented the Chair's report & a short video showing Open Kingdom's work in Cameroon:

The Trustee's Annual Report to the Charity Commission doesn't include any information about our operations in our second full year as Open Kingdom (OK) in 2008, so this report to the AGM fills in some of the detail.

Diane and I created OK as a vehicle to support our work after our second visit to Africa together in 2006, when we spent two weeks in Cameroon on a 'fact-finding' mission. We revisited our contacts in Cameroon in 2007, spending three weeks renewing friendships, inspecting wells and visiting villages which had been earmarked to receive wells.

In 2007 three friends joined us to form a 'board of trustees' and we successfully applied for charitable status. Another five friends joined us in becoming members of our association taking our membership to nine in

total. Unfortunately one of our original trustees, Shelley Chapman, decided to resign because of pressure of work in the family business. The trustees would like to formally acknowledge the significant contribution Shelley made to Open Kingdom, particularly her fund-raising efforts. We are delighted to announce that Christine Tooze has agreed to stand as her replacement.

Today we are once more inviting all who have supported us in the last year to join us as members and to have a voice in the operation of OK.

Once again the support of a range of individuals, community groups, businesses, schools, a charitable trust, churches etc has enabled us to report the following successes to you in our second full year of operations:

- A further 11 wells were installed in six villages in northwest Cameroon during 2008, bringing the total number installed to 19.
- An additional six wells have been installed in the first half of 2009 and funds have been raised for at least another four to be completed by the end of the year.

Our partners in Cameroon (MISEM) have been offered a building which would be suitable for use as an orphanage. The asking price is \$50,000 for a building used as a hotel with 18 bedrooms, two small and one large meeting room. We will be exploring the possibility of fundraising for this cause in the coming year.

We were unable to return to Cameroon in 2008 because of other priorities, but hope to visit again as soon as funds allow, to inspect the work which has been done since our last visit, and to continue to develop our relationship with our partners and with the people of Cameroon. The falling value of the pound has been a significant factor in both the cost of the wells and in travelling to Cameroon in the last two years. We have seen a 40% fall in the value of Sterling against the Central African Franc during 2008. Without any other factors involved, the cost of a single well has increased from approx £280 to approx £360.

Nothing came of our contact in Andhra Pradesh, India. We were unable to confirm the legitimacy of this project, but we have recently been contacted by another possible partner in Pakistan. We are in the early stages of investigating this organisation and checking their potential as a partner for OK.

We would like to extend our grateful thanks to all those who have contributed so generously in the last twelve months, enabling the work to continue in Cameroon.



Vic Whittaker
Chair

2.2 Treasurer's Report – Presented by Diane Whittaker

1st January to 31st December 2008

This has been another good year financially for *Open Kingdom*, through the Grace of God and the generous financial provision of our supporters.

In your pack you will find a copy of our accounts for this year. A full set of accounts providing more detailed information is available for your inspection today, if required.

The first section 'Receipts' details money received from various sources, totalling £7006. The second section, 'Payments', details how the money has been spent, totalling £4535. This leaves an 'excess' which means we have received more money than we have spent and our balance for the year ending 2008 was £2471. Add this figure to the excess from 2007 and our bank balance at 31st December was £3,235 in credit. This figure was high due to the fact that we were waiting for confirmation and photographic evidence of completion of the previous well before sending out further funds. In addition, a figure of £1000 had been set aside for the India project which did not materialise.

The greater part of the money raised has been for the construction of wells, a total of £4626. Additional funds have been donated specifically for support of the Nchinde family, a total of £825.00, with a smaller amount of funds being given for donations to ministries, gifts for individuals and £1000 to be used at our discretion, which had been set aside for the India project.

Since January 2008 the exchange rate has dropped steadily from 847.69cfa to 673.91cfa to the pound in December 2008. This means that the cost of purchasing a well during 2008 increased from £287.00 to £361.00, an increase of 25%. Since our first well was installed in Cameroon in January 2007 at a cost of £254, 956.38 CfA to the pound, the cost has risen by 42%, due only to the falling pound. However, this is still a very small price to pay to bring life giving water to this region.

As we were granted charity status in February 2008, we are now able to claim tax on individual giving through the Gift Aid scheme. A claim has been submitted to the Inland Revenue amounting to £662.62 for this accounting period, which is yet to be received.

4. Appointment of Charity Trustees:

Shelley Chapman has tendered her resignation, because of increased workload and commitments to her business. The remaining trustees had indicated their willingness to stand for a further year and Christine Tooze kindly offered to stand as a replacement for Shelley. As there were no other nominations the following members were elected as trustees for the next 12 months: Vic & Di Whittaker, Anne Saxton, Paolo Altamura and Christine Tooze.

5. Proposed Resolutions:

There were no additional proposals

6. Any other business:

No other business

The meeting closed at 4:00pm.