

During Robin's visit in September the Jersey Gambia Schools Trust (Gambia Sub Committee) appointed a Board of Governors to oversee the running of the Skills Centre. Mr. Landing E. Sanyang was appointed Principal, and Secretary of the Board with no voting rights.

It has been a long, hard, journey but the end of the initial infrastructure is now in sight. We will have to continue raising funds to finance the running and maintenance of the Skills Centre. We hope that in two years the Centre will be more or less self sufficient, but we know that many of the students who attend the college will be hard pushed to pay their fees in full. It is hoped to set up a Sponsorship section so that those students who are without funds may apply for sponsorship. The cost of Tuition will be £200.00 per Student per year, of which amount each student will be asked to contribute £30.00 per year, with a sponsorship amount of £170.00 per year to cover the remaining cost.

The subjects which will be covered include:

Masonry; Carpentry/Joinery; Metalwork/Fabrication;
Tailoring/Home Economics; General Electrical/Mechanical Maintenance.

Once this initial Curriculum is established the Trust have the option of further land in Sohm, where it is hoped to run courses in Animal Husbandry and Arable Farming as near to European standards as it is possible to achieve in The Gambia. Also it is hoped to open a course in Adult Literacy, which is sadly lacking in The Gambia.

WE NEED YOUR HELP - AGAIN!!

To enable the majority of Students to complete their various two year courses it will be necessary for them to have sponsorship.

Each Student will be expected to pay £30.00 per year towards their fees.

We would like you to consider helping these students by sponsoring an amount of £170.00 per year, for two years, to cover their costs.

As Sponsors you will receive regular reports on your Student's progress, with a full Tutorial Report at the end of each year.

Please contact Mrs. Carol Mallet, Church House, Rue de l'Eglise, St.Peter, JE3 7AG for further details and Sponsorship Application Forms

E.mail: carol@jerseygambiaschools.org **Tel/Fax:** 01534 481845



Jersey Gambia Schools Trust

Church House, Rue de l'Eglise, St. Peter, Jersey, C.I., JE3 7AG
Phone/Fax: +44(1534)481845 e-mail: carol@jerseygambiaschools.org
Website: www.jerseygambiaschools.org



SOHM VILLAGE SKILLS CENTRE
THE GAMBIA, WEST AFRICA.

A Brief Synopsis of Why, When and How



A Brief History of The Jersey Gambia Schools Trust

The Jersey Gambia Schools Trust was formed in May 1998, initially as The Gambia Schools Trust Fund. Our main aim at that time was to provide funding for wells, latrines, classrooms and kitchens in Lower Basic Schools.

We completed eleven projects between 1998 and 2003, financed mainly from our own fund raising efforts. These included two Kitchens; one four classroom block with office and store room (which is still considered to be the best in the area!), the others were mainly sinking of wells with hand pumps and dry pit latrines. In 2000 the Jersey Overseas Aid policy on funding for Jersey charities working overseas was changed and we were able to apply for Grant Aid for small projects in the area of wells and sanitation. This meant that our projects from the year 2000 were also funded by Jersey Overseas Aid, with a limit of £3,500.00 per project. This was significant to our ability to complete our smaller projects.

Sohm Village Skills Centre

In 2003, having heard the Gambian President express the wish that young people should not 'bumster and hassle' in the tourist areas after leaving school, but stay in their villages and work for and with their local communities, the Trust applied to Jersey Overseas Aid for funding for our major project - this being the building of a Skills Centre for further education in the Provinces to enable these young people to gain a skill so that they would be able to work for themselves. Our application was accepted on the understanding that - a. we had our plot of land; b. that the foundations of the first building, to be erected by the Overseas Aid Team who would travel to The Gambia to construct it, were in place before the team arrived.

In November 2003 a plot of land was gifted to the Trust by the Sohm Village Community. On returning to Jersey we went to a meeting held by the Overseas Aid Committee, where our application for the funding of the Skills Centre was accepted. In March 2004 a Team of twelve people from Jersey, with twelve local Gambian workers, began work on the Main Workshop - the foundations for which were in place before the arrival of the Team. The first building to be constructed was the Accommodation Block, built by local Contractors before the arrival of the Overseas Aid Team from Jersey. It was completed and furnished the day the Team arrived!

The Main Workshop was completed in the three weeks that the Team were in The Gambia, apart from the roof caps which were put in place after the departure of the Jersey Team.



Accommodation Block, completed by local Contractors before the arrival of the Overseas Aid Team. Jersey Flag being put in position!

*Below:
Jersey Overseas Aid Team in Occupation
March 2004*



Completed Main Workshop March 2004

The Jersey Team returned to Jersey at the beginning of April 2004, and work on the construction of the Skills Centre continued using local Contractors, under the supervision of our Project Coordinator, Mr. Landing E. Sanyang.

In October 2004 one of the Overseas Aid Team, Mick Doublet, volunteered to go back to The Gambia to oversee the ongoing work at the Centre, as he was keen to see it finished. He returned to Jersey in May 2005 for a brief holiday. Whilst he was in Jersey the work did not move forward very quickly. However, on his return to Gambia in June work picked up again. Unfortunately, due to very heavy rains and unexpected extra expenses it was decided to suspend construction until more funds were available. Mick returned to Jersey in August 2005. He went back to The Gambia for two weeks in November. Sadly, he contracted Malaria and died two weeks after his return to Jersey. With funds now available work continued well with the appointment of another local Contractor, under the supervision of Mr. Sanyang and Mr. Moro Ceesay, Project Manager. Trust Chairman, Robin Mallet, went down to The Gambia in March 2006, by which time the majority of the building work was complete.

In September 2006 Robin Mallet returned to The Gambia to oversee the completion of the building work at the Skills Centre. Work had progressed very well during the summer. Apart from the finishing touches, the Toilet Block was complete, as were the Classroom Block, Administration Block, Kitchen and the Canteen/Common Room.