

Olney—Newton Link

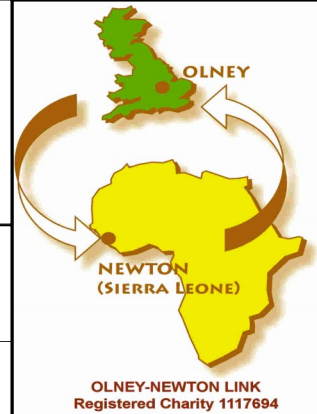
"To advance education and to relieve poverty

in the village of Newton, Sierra Leone, by the provision of charitable assistance"

February 2017

www.olneynewtonlink.org.uk

ONL



The Newton Preschool

Excellent news from Newton today, 26th January 2017. Registration has begun for the pre-school...this is a photograph of some of the children who will attend. I hope that in the next newsletter we will have photographs of the opening day...



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Where the Money Goes



At last the end is in sight for the completion of the Newton Preschool. The project was proposed in the autumn of 2014 but became more urgent as the Ebola crisis took hold. The Newton Committee had perceived a need for a Preschool in order to enable young women, especially those who have taken on the care of Ebola orphans, to work and thereby supplement the family income. To date we have sent £25,000 and a carton of toys and other 'educational' materials. We have also provided a water well at a cost of approximately £3000, which will serve both the preschool and the Olney Institute next door.

Inflation in Sierra Leone is currently running at about 10%. At the beginning of December the SL government raised the cost of fuel by a whopping 40%, from 4300Leones/litre to 6000Leones /litre thereby sending up the cost of most commodities.

The treasurer, Mabinty Sesay, sends us accounts several times a year so that we know what they are buying with the money we send.



What do the Newton Committee spend the money on?

This is the standard set of materials that any builder would recognise. Initially foundations must be dug and then building blocks made. These are made of concrete, a longer lasting material than the mud blocks used for local housing. Cement has to be imported and the cost varies considerably. Sand is extracted from the local beaches, a practice much criticised by environmentalists. We were intrigued to hear that the Newton committee had decided to include extra strengthening of the walls so that a second storey could be added at some future date. Land is something else that is becoming more expensive on an almost daily basis.

Roofing materials are then required. The most durable material is zinc, again this has to be imported and the price varies considerably. Doors and windows need to be made of metal to prevent termite damage, again all must be imported.

Other materials purchased are what anyone needs for building: nails, boards, iron rods, plaster, paint etc. and of course, payment to the workmen. The average pay is approximately £1/hour. There is no machinery such as a JCB or concrete mixer, everything has to be done by hand.

Why does the cost of projects like this rise?

Firstly, we ask for an estimate of cost before we undertake a project BUT we have learned from experience that these are very unreliable. The way business is done in Third World Countries is a far cry from UK practices. Builders, architects, plumbers etc. are self-taught and the idea of tendering for a job such as building a school is not understood. This also means they cannot always see in advance what is likely to be needed.

Secondly a small charity like ours cannot raise money quickly, we can only send money as we get it. As there are no credit facilities available in Sierra Leone the Newton committee can only purchase materials as the money comes in. In the meantime, the costs have risen.

Thirdly we are at the mercy of the exchange rate. An increase in the rate is good news in one way as we get more Leones for our £ BUT the cost of imported materials rises too.

A remarkable achievement?

Against this backdrop, plus many more problems such as heavy rains, the Newton Committee and Mabinty in particular have succeeded in building a preschool for at least 100 disadvantaged children. A remarkable achievement. I hope you agree and will continue to support the work of the Olney-Newton Link.

Rachel Lintern



Football!!

We have received photos from Newton (via WhatsApp, so the quality of the pictures is limited) of the kit donated by Olney Town Colts Football Club, and which has been received with great joy and appreciation in Sierra Leone.

We send our gratitude to the club on behalf of the children in Newton.



Fund Raising Events

The Q U I Z

Our thanks go to Rob again for the questions, some of which were very difficult this year! We also thank all those who catered, the food was delicious, and everyone else who helped. The magnificent sum of £750 was raised—it has now been sent to Newton for the preschool.

The winning team was 'The Welsh and John' but it was a very close competition so all teams are to be commended for thinking hard about the Fifth Spy and 500 miles... or was it 1000 they walked?



CAR R A F F L E

Are you one of the people who bought a ticket for the Milton Keynes Community Car Raffle before Christmas? If so, you may be about to hear that you've won a brand new VW Polo—the draw is on 25th February.

Thank you very much Tricia, Sue, Rose, Jenny and John for helping me sell tickets at the City Centre.



We raised £126 for the Link and the same amount for MK Community funds—maybe your organisation will benefit from this.

C A R O L S

Our tuneful band of ONL Singers went out on a cold, dark and damp night and raised £123 for the Link. Thank you all!

They then joined up with the 24 Doors of Advent singers for the last carol.

Our thanks to the 24 Doors for their generous donation of £463—they raise money for several Olney charities, and we are very grateful to them for their stalwart efforts in singing 24 times on 24 days and for including the people of Newton as a beneficiary.



DICKENS DAY

When I walked through Fountains Court the shopkeepers were saying they had never seen it so busy.

Rachel

Many, many bottles were donated. The sun shone and the team were brilliant at selling tombola tickets.

Tricia

The stall made a profit of £867. Well done and thank you to all who helped by donating or by manning the stall.



ONL Committee, Newton

Valicious King—Chair
Abu Bakarr Fofana—Secretary
Mabinty Sesay—Treasurer
Oseh Jones
Mariatu Kamara
Mohamed Koroma
Mohamed Y Sesay
Doris Harding
Unisa Turay

The COMMITTEES

ONL Trustees

Anne McCallum—Chair
Contact Anne at
43 Carey Way, Olney, Bucks
MK46 4DR
Tel: 01234 711196
Rachel Lintern—Vice Chair
Tricia Selwood—Treasurer
Janet Howe—Secretary
Chloe Kegg
Tom James
Brian Partridge
Glenn Selwood
Marilyn Watkins

Message from the Editor

Please E mail me if you would like to comment on something in the newsletter, or perhaps even write something for it!

And **we are looking for new trustees...** could you offer some help?

Janet Howe

olneynewtonlinknewsletter@gmail.com

Bozeat Windmill Singers



Songs from the Shows
Saturday 20th May
7.30pm, URC



TOYS are ONL

In answer to the request from Newton for toys for the Preschool we have looked around and filled one carton which has just arrived in Freetown. Emmaus allowed us 2 large bags of toys and books for £10 and we also sent a selection of toys from Scrap Store in MK. The carton included mostly 'educational' toys such as alphabets, numbers, shapes etc and a few more cuddly toys, in view of the age of the preschool children.

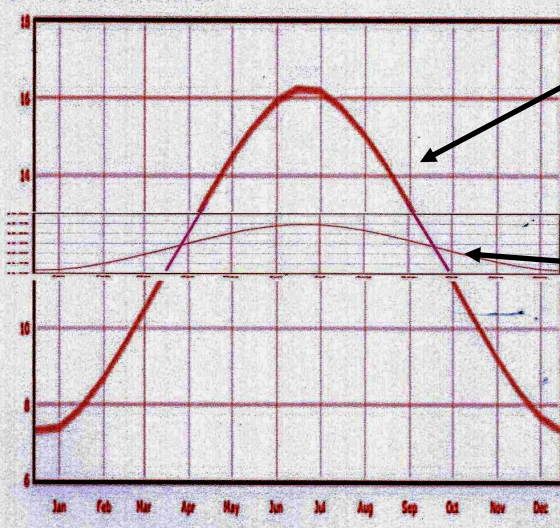
We have also had a request from James Kabia (Baptist minister in Newton) for toys and we would welcome any almost new toys you no longer need. These can be for any age children.



How long is a day?

Comparison of Daylight between Olney and Sierra Leone

DAYLENGTH time



The length of daylight in the UK

The hours of daylight in Sierra Leone

Month of the year

FORTHCOMING EVENTS 2017

Pancake Day 28th February	Our stall—Easter Eggs to win, and other exciting things
Friday 31st March	Soup Lunch at Anne's—details to follow (by e mail/poster)
Wednesday 10th May	General Meeting and AGM
Saturday 20th May	Bozeat Windmill Singers Concert—Songs from the Shows, 7.30pm, URC

More details can be found on our website: www.olneynewtonlink.org.uk

CORPORATE MEMBERS SCHEME

We are fortunate to receive support from local businesses, both financial and practical. Corporate members sponsor the Link's work through a series of packages:

Bronze Membership, £100 per annum – Benefits:- your website link and name on ONL's website.


Silver Membership, £150 per annum – Benefits:- your website and name and description on ONL's website and your company name and logo in our newsletter.

Gold Membership, £200 per annum – Benefits:- your website name and link and profile (maximum 30 words) on ONL's website and listing as sponsor in newsletter and logo.

Platinum Membership, £500 per annum - Benefits; link, profile (maximum 200 words) on ONL website, logo and advert carrying their logo in newsletter

Our very grateful thanks to those who have already joined the scheme—**Ashwood Chimneys, David Coles, Heron Opticians, J Garrard & Allen, Souls Garages and Stephen Oakley.**

GOLD

	Ashwood Chimneys is a professional, highly accredited, family run company based in Olney which undertakes and specialises in all aspects of chimney works within the Beds, Bucks and Northants area.
	David Coles Architects
	J Garrard & Allen , Solicitors, has been established for over 200 years. The firm has a local and international clientele. We like to provide a friendly, efficient and prompt service to our clients, many of whom have been with us for years. The firm is pleased to sponsor the Link's work. For more details of the areas of law covered by the firm, please view the website— www.jgalaw.co.uk
	Heron Opticians a friendly, professional family business.
	Stephen Oakley
	Souls Garages

SILVER

BRONZE