

## Ashanti News 11 May 2010

*David Williamson, a founder trustee of Ashanti Development and professional water engineer with long experience as a WaterAid volunteer, describes progress in providing Ashanti villages with water and sanitation.*

The underground strata around Gyetiase is mainly metamorphosed sedimentary and igneous rock. It doesn't hold water, so most villages rely on streams. If boreholes in this part of Ghana are to give a reliable yield they must intercept cracks in the solid rock mass and, even with the help of experienced hydrogeologists, only about one in three boreholes is successful.

Simon Sholl (who also runs our National Health Insurance Scheme) has just come back from Ghana, where he helped site new boreholes including one at Mprim village, where we had almost given up hope. According to Simon, the borehole is providing 'shiploads' of water. He also got the water pumps working again in the villages we call PSK – Patase, Sesease and Master's home village, Kokoben.

The situation in Gyetiase and Tadiesa is very sad. In 2004, Ashanti Development raised over £24,000 to attach both villages to the Mampong mains, but since then water has hardly ever reached the villages. There's nothing technically wrong with the system, and we've taken the matter up over and over with the Ghana Water Company, who are indisputably at fault. Because of their failure, children still have to fetch water from the stream before breakfast and arrive at school already tired, infant deaths through dysentery still occur and poor personal hygiene still leads to bad health. *cont on p.2*

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**STOP PRESS** This year's Gala, when dancers from The Royal Ballet perform a fund-raiser for Ashanti Development, will be on **Sunday, September 19**. There will be a volunteers' meeting immediately beforehand.

Electricity finally reached Gyetiase last month, at about the same time as we finished building the new primary school.

Chartered surveyor David Hollingsworth has volunteered to supervise construction of the clinic's flying roof, which will finish the building.



*Most villages rely on local streams for water.*

Late last year, we thought we'd had a breakthrough when we managed to persuade the King of Ashanti to help us. After repeated intervention by his secretary, Mr Kofi Boateng, the two villages started receiving water – but not for long. When Nicholas Aboagye, our latest long-term volunteer returns to Ashanti later this month, he will have one more try at persuading Mr Boateng to help before we consider legal action.

Rainwater harvesting should also be a good means of providing water but as most of the rain falls during a five month period storage is needed in relatively expensive ferrocement or PVC tanks. Many of the sheet steel roofs are too rusty to be used for rainwater harvesting.

Most villages still rely on the local streams for their supply of water. The water, from springs deep in the bush, flows down the valley and is scooped from a shallow stream with a bowl or similar container at a convenient location which also acts as a laundry point. Where we cannot provide an alternative source we are looking to improve these water access points.

### **The Village Programme**

Ashanti Development always starts work with new villages by focussing on water and sanitation.

1. First, we ask our contractors, ProNet (set up and trained by WaterAid) to make a proper study, or baseline survey, of the village's water supply and infrastructure. These baseline surveys are available in the Gyetiase clinic, or through me in the UK, for anyone interested.
2. ProNet sets up or strengthens community institutions including the Water and Sanitation Committee (Watsan), most of whose members are women. The Watsan's job will be to organise and maintain the water equipment and facilities in good order, and ProNet will remain in touch with villages for some years to make sure the lessons stick.
3. Working with the Watsan, we try to improve the quantity and quality of the water supply. We consider all available options, including pump repair, boreholes, rainwater harvesting, spring protection, connection to existing water mains and filtration systems.
4. ProNet trains the villagers in health and hygiene to enable them to use the water and sanitation facilities as effectively as possible.
5. ProNet helps them construct one latrine per household, to the principles set out by WaterAid. The household does all the manual work while we pay for bought materials like cement and wood.

For the first few years of Ashanti Development's operation, we were hampered by lack of understanding of the local geology. For example, we didn't want to waste money on borehole drilling if there was some better way of siting the drilling rigs.

In 2009, Ove Arup came to our aid, and seconded Vicky Coy and Catriona Neath, a hydrogeologist and a geochemist, to help us. Vicky and Cat's study concluded that there was no single obvious way of improving matters, so we are now addressing each on a case-by-case basis. The table below shows our progress.

<b>Village</b>	<b>Baseline survey</b>	<b>Water provision**</b> √ = complete ½ = part complete	<b>Health &amp; hygiene training</b>	<b>Community institutions strengthened</b>	<b>Household and other latrines provided</b>
Gyetiase	√	√ - but not available	√	√	140
and Tadiesa	√	√ - but not available	√	√	Communal latrines renovated; Boys/girls latrine blocks built
Bimma	√	√	o/s	o/s	100 programmed
Dida	√	√	√	√	26
Kruwi	√	√	√	√	86
Amangoase	√	2010	√		19
Akyease	√	Poor	√	√	55 under construction
Ananso	√	Water quality work needed	√	√	104 under construction
Abonkunso	√		√	√	56 under construction
Kokoben	2011	√	2011	2011	2011
Patase	2011	√	2011	2011	2011
Sesease	2011	√	2011	2011	2011
Ongwase	2011	Borehole failed			
Old Daamang		√	√	√	26
Mprim		√			
Atwea	2010				
Abasua	2010				
Asuafu	2010				
Adutwan	2010				

## **Ashanti Development Volunteers' Weekend Preparing for a Summer School in Gyetiase**

*by Kathy Rees*

Last month, there was a weekend gathering of eleven enthusiastic and energetic volunteers in Cambridge, preparing for a two week visit to Gyetiase from 23<sup>rd</sup> July to 8<sup>th</sup> August. The volunteers come from distances as far apart as Hackney and Glasgow, and range in age from 15 to 51. Martha and Penny joined us for the Saturday evening, helping us to prepare for the trip.

The volunteers will go to Gyetiase for the final week of the Ghanaian summer term. The Primary School teachers from Gyetiase and from the neighbouring villages of Bima and Nkwabrim will be attending a Teacher Training course run by two volunteer teachers, Jenny and Fatima, encouraging more interactive and child-centred methods of delivering the curriculum. While the teachers are away from their classrooms, the volunteers will be standing in to teach the children. Much of the weekend was devoted to planning lessons, choosing resources, and organising timetables. Over the past six months a Cambridge-based group of ladies has been making educational resources out of recycled materials like milk-bottle tops, corks, buttons and margarine pots. All these were incorporated into our lesson plans!

The second week of our visit coincides with the first week of the school holiday and so we have planned a range of activities for the children, both of Primary and Secondary school age: arts and crafts like making puppets and story-books, team sports like football, dodge-ball and parachute games, as well as language-based activities using drama, singing and games.

If this Summer School 'model' is successful, we hope to repeat it over the coming years, making Gyetiase Primary School a 'Centre of Excellence', and gradually involving teachers from more and more of the surrounding Ashanti villages. Already there have been requests from new volunteers to be involved in the Summer School 2011 – we will be booking the flights for that trip at the end of August 2010.

### **TREE PLANTING PROJECT**

*The area round Gyetiase suffers severe deforestation, so Ashanti Development volunteer Nicholas Aboagye has started a new tree planting project.*

The project will involve planting ornamental, avenue and economic trees along village streets and by the side of roads linking one town to another.

To create environmental awareness in young people, Junior High School students will be encouraged to take part in the project. Selected students in their first year at JHS will plant one tree each and then take care of it for the three years until they leave school. They will be rewarded by cash, certificates, books or educational materials, depending on the success of their trees. One teacher will be selected from each of the participating schools to act as project supervisor, but Ashanti Development staff will act as overall coordinators.

We estimate that the project will result in the planting of over three hundred trees every year.

### **New Constitution**

Below are Ashanti Development's new constitutional details. We recently changed from a registered charity to a charitable company with limited liability.

Registered Office:  
21 Downing Court  
Grenville Street  
London WC1N 1LX

Registered charity no.1133517  
Company no. 7113261  
registered in England and Wales  
[www.ashanti-development.org](http://www.ashanti-development.org)