

**Award winning ethical, responsible, sustainable volunteer travel**



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## Editorial



Well this is the Spring issue although you wouldn't know it as more snow is forecast as I write this! which makes it rather galling to read Dianne's report from The Gambia, thanks for mentioning the lovely weather Dianne! although in her defence I know how hard Dianne is working.

Thinking of the weather in The Gambia reminds me that Sallie wrote a piece [About the bloggers](#) and included a picture of me when I volunteered there, let me explain it was about 30 degrees and as it was the rainy season it was nearly 100% humidity so I was hot and tired I generally don't look that rough!

Seeing the picture of Dianne at Safari Gardens reminds me of the falling mangos, you had to be careful not to sit under a mango tree that is until one of the staff shinned up a tree and knocked off the loose fruit. It was quite amusing to watch as there is no elf and safety in Africa!

Well enough of my memories of The Gambia, hope you enjoy the newsletter

## Nigel Pegler

Any comments and volunteer experiences welcome at [newsletter@travel-peopleandplaces](mailto:newsletter@travel-peopleandplaces)

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## volunteers are busy in The Gambia - and introducing Lamin

Written by Dianne, *people and places* education advisor



I am writing this report sitting by the pool at Safari Garden Hotel on a sunny Sunday morning. The sky is blue and the temperature will rise to about 30 degrees later on today, so I hope those of you in cold rainy England are feeling jealous!

to read more of Dianne`s report click [here](#)

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## The damage when volunteers don't name and shame

I listened to a short radio article yesterday on [the BBC 4 consumer programme 'You and Yours'](#) - it's about 40 minutes in.

It was very disappointing. A young medical student called Savannah recounted a disturbing story about "a large sending organisation" that had placed her in poor accommodation and at a challenging project with no support - I think the interview was about 4 minutes. It did nothing but sensationalise - it was prurient in its sensationalisation of what sounded like a horrid and worrying experience for the volunteer (and by inference her co-volunteers).

to read the rest of Sallies blog [click here](#)

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## You can Fund raise for volunteer trip

Great news - our colleagues at [Volunteer Forever](#) have launched an easy and secure way for you to raise funds on-line for your next volunteer experience!

Many volunteers have raised funds, and continue to do so, when they return home after their placements - which is hugely appreciated, of course.

But future volunteers can now invite friends, family and colleagues to help support their work by donating to the costs of the trip! How good is that?



One of our volunteers, about to travel to [The Gambia](#) for her placement with ASSET, is proof of how helpful people want to be ... [This is what Barbara wrote:](#)

## "Enjoy yourself in poor countries? Become a voluntourist"



A few hours ago I was notified that someone had posted a topic with the above title on [the people and places group on linked in](#)

At first I thought the video was a spoof – to my horror it wasn't – [take a look at the video here](#) if you don't the rest of this post will be pretty meaningless.

My first reaction was to "out" the profoundly disturbing video on all the social networks I'm on – as an example of how bad "poverty tourism" marketing can be.

What I should have done was wait until I had written this post. Less than two weeks ago I wrote [a piece about the need to stop bitching about poor practise and promote good practise](#) .

...and what did I do? I bitched.

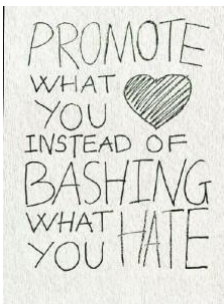
So now I am trying to put that right.  
[read how here](#)

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## Volunteer Travel - less bitching more balance needed!

There has been much criticism of volunteer travel – and "voluntourism" recently. (Where and how the two differ and the confusion caused by the subjective use of the two terms is fodder for a whole other post – I must do that one day soon!)

We at **people and places** are leading much of that criticism – I like to think that we campaign by demonstrating good practise and highlighting bad practise.... but I am concerned that we may be getting the balance wrong.



thanks to Action for Happiness  
for this image

I saw this picture the other day and, for me, it crystallises what I think those of us who are campaigning for [better and more responsible volunteering](#) should be doing now.

[to read the rest of Sallies thoughts click here](#)

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## Common Mistakes Made Before, During and After Volunteering



Some musings by Sallie as published by [Volunteer Forever](#) - ( a great site for info and fundraising for your volunteer trip. and how clever is the graphic!)

This is my take on the most common mistakes made **BEFORE**, **DURING** and **AFTER** volunteering.

I want to preface by stating clearly that I believe the vast majority of people who volunteer are doing so with the best of intentions. Our work at people and places brings us into contact with some pretty blooming marvelous people – some of whom may have made some of these mistakes, some of whom made none – oh shut up and get on with it Sallie...

[to read more click here](#)

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## Volunteers your project needs you

There's been a lot of discussion recently about the value – or not – of review sites. Some are fantastic and the reviews are genuine – with lots of useful information about the realities of volunteer travel – and these are the sites we encourage our volunteers to write reviews for.

These are our favourite sites ... so far ... you may know of others where reviews are genuine and trustworthy.

[Volunteer Forever](#) – and [Go Overseas](#)

But – and there is always a 'but' – the more reviews an organisation has, the more visible that organisation is on the website. Hence our earnest plea for volunteers to PLEASE write something about your trip.

[Read the latest review here](#) - about a volunteer's experience in [Amar Jyoti School in Nepal](#).



Huge thanks to those of you who've written reviews so far, but we really will welcome more! – and we fully appreciate that not everyone wants to or has the time.

But – yes, another 'but'! – the more reviews there are, the higher your project will appear in the listings, the more people will read about it – and the more may want to go, thus building upon your own work!

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## Volunteering abroad for teachers isn't always easy during the summer holidays...

because many of the schools have the same long holiday in July and August as us. Take a look at two very different education projects where you are needed at this time of year  
**just click on the picture**



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## catch up on recent media coverage of volunteer travel

There's been a lot written about volunteer travel in the last few months.

So here's a digest of some of the articles we found most interesting or annoying or worrying or even pleasing - some include us - most do not.

This article certainly caused a stir - [the tragic rise of gap year voluntourism](#)

from The Guardian [Beware voluntourists doing good](#)

[Why we no longer accept unqualified teaching volunteers travel on why they no longer accept unqualified teaching volunteers](#)

[from the BBC slum tourism](#)

[a post from worried volunteer Mary](#)

[what is voluntourism](#)

And the debate about volunteering with children continues

[To keep up to date follow the better child protection page on facebook](#)

[This video incensed us](#) and [made Sallie write this blog](#)

[This BBC interview with a volunteer was disappointing](#) in that it sensationalised but didn't offer advice [and here's our response](#)

[and finally a video interview with Sallie](#)

Phew! Said there had been a lot going on!

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## **Volunteer videos and so much more, don't miss all the great volunteer video interviews and stories**

If you haven't already spotted our YouTube channel it's worth a look. There are video interviews from volunteers and if you have videos of your time volunteering or one of the talks you have done – we know many of you talk to groups on your return from volunteering – please send them to us so we can share them.

[Take a look at the YouTube videos here](#)

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**Click the picture to watch a recent interview with Sallie**

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**meet the *people and places* team [here](#)**



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[Take a look here at slideshare for slide shows from volunteers](#) – if you have a slide show to share please do send it to us thanks so much to all the volunteers who have contributed to date.

Remember we are on facebook too –[follow us here](#) – in the blog and on facebook are where we tend to post our latest news.

If you like beautiful pictures and funny visuals we are also on pinterest – [follow us here](#)

So there's lots of info out there from us – please follow us where ever you choose. Remember if you want notifications when a new story is posted on the blog you will need to register up in the top left hand corner.

Would you write a review about your volunteer experience with us either at

[volunteer forever.com](http://volunteerforever.com)

or at

[go overseas.com](http://gooverseas.com)

**Latest news nearly missed the newsletter!**

as always Sallie had a last minute addition for the newsletter, to read it click below

[New partners for the volunteer program in Saint Lucia](#)