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Dear the trustees,

I am writing again to thank you for your donation towards my year volunteering over 12 months ago.

My last months in Malawi were a whirlwind of extremely busy times finished with a lot of emotion. All of my Standard 3's had to sit exams whereby I had the pressure of deciding if a child failed or passed the year. Many did extremely well particularly in English which was a huge relief! I also had to organise an end of term assembly where the kids performed a play based on The Jungle Book which was their favourite story that we had studied in class. They all did really well and I was extremely proud of them.

Our last day of school was on the 15th of July. My partners and I then went travelling for three weeks which was an amazing adventure, we saw the North of Lake Malawi, Nkhata Bay which is stunning. We then camped at Nyika National Park where we saw leopards, wild zebras (roaming the fields like horses would in the UK) and hyenas. It was an experience I will never forget! We then went back to our project for one week to say our goodbyes to the children and the families of Bolera which was very emotional.

Whilst I have enjoyed talking to family and friends about my year, it's proving difficult to explain to people how much the past 12 months have meant to me! I recently attended a returned volunteer debriefing course on Coll which involved a lot of reflection upon my year. The main thing I realised was that everything that inspired me to be my best self in Malawi came down to the people.

I feel Malawians have to be up there with the friendliest people you could ever meet in the world. After long days teaching I spent afternoons in the village where families welcomed me into their home. Despite the village being extremely poor, the villagers just don't stop giving!!!! From hugs to food to smiles and most importantly their time. You will find Malawians *always* have time for people, even people they don't know; except they very rarely cross somebody they don't know as they live in such a tight knit community. Bolera has over 200 family names, yet from my perspective they are all one big family; everybody knows and laughs and talks with and has time for absolutely everybody. One thing Malawi has taught me is to always make time for people as our friendships and relationships are extremely important!!! Malawians may not have much but they are extremely rich in kindness, generosity and friendship.

The friendships I made in Malawi will stay with me forever. The closest friend I made was a lady called Agnes. Her family suffered a lot during Malawi's drought; she struggled to feed her six children which was extremely heart breaking. However despite all of this Agnes genuinely radiates with positivity and happiness which I found so inspiring! There was always a smile on her face. This made me realise how much I took for granted growing up in the UK and how privileged I am. Never again will I get upset or worry about silly mundane things. Her family will be in my heart forever.

Malawi will always be with me and I miss all the children I taught ridiculous amounts. I found a quote which sums up my feelings quite well. *"You will never be completely at home again, because a part of you will always be elsewhere. That is the price you pay for the richness of loving and knowing people in more than one place."* Thank you again for your donation which made my year possible! I am so very grateful. As cheesy as it sounds, Malawi has taught me how easy it is to be happy - I would not have had these life changing experiences without your help.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

HP Smith

Creating a maintenance schedule for some tasks, based on existing management plan and past experience. This can be added onto a calendar, along with a priority level for the task and reviewed at the start of each month.

General

- Create named subdivisions of compartments for ease of reference
- Draw-up better map with new subdivisions
- Add tasks to calendar along with priority rating
- Schedule in clearing steps of leaf debris (October?)
- Schedule pathway clearance (quarterly?)
- Cut/trim new pathway (cpt 4)
- Trim main clearing

Knotweed

- Cutting schedule (early May, late July)
- Monitoring (use poles?)
- Investigate injection kits and other treatments.

Bramble

- Create schedule for cutting of bramble regrowth (grazing a bonus).
- Root pulling encouraged.

Bamboo

- Determine spread of running bamboo.
- Possibly map and number running/clumping bamboo.
- Monitor height of running bamboo and cut when necessary, weakening over time.
- Eradicate running bamboo from site.
- Identify bamboo

Rhododendron

- Remove some, trim back others for retained understory and shelter from wind.
- Mark clumps for removal (or for keeps?)
- Create schedule for root removal (at time when least affect wildlife)

Trees

- Record details of any tree failures.
- Schedule in time to clean-up fallen trees (as much as we can with hand tools)
- Schedule site walk with Phil (once/twice a year?)
- Any applicable fallen/hanging limbs to be taken care of by interns (need pruning saw)
- Investigate what other health checks can be done.
- Map arboretum species
- Start investigating restocking

Drainage / Water course

- Schedule in water course clearance (ref management plan)
- Start planning drainage (ref drainage report)
- Investigate goos species to strengthen bank (Willow?)