



## Frequently Asked Questions for Malawi 2024

(v2.0 – April 2024)

The [Malawi 2024 pages on the Berkshire Scouts website](#) are regularly updated and serves as a fantastic resource for us all. They include:

- key dates, eg: briefings, training weekends and event dates;
- expedition terms and conditions;
- stage payment schedule;
- Bulletins and webinar recordings;
- insurance documents;
- personal kit list and expedition online shop;
- Project Africa Challenge Award pages and Global Awareness Programme resources;
- top awards guidance (to see how participation can contribute to your Platinum and Diamond Chief Scouts Awards, Gold DofE Award and King's Scout Award – as well as other Explorer badges);
- templates, eg: logos, fundraising letters, evidence of young person participation;
- details of our in-country charity partner (Joshua; in Malawi);
- Facebook links.

Updates are signposted in the 'latest news' section at the head of the page – be sure to bookmark the page and visit it regularly. **Updated and new content for this version is marked with \*\***

Many of your questions will be answered on the website and upcoming communications. We have drawn out a selection of specific topics which we hope will be helpful . . .

### Contact details

- How do I contact the leader team?
  - In the first instance, please email [africa2024@berkshirescouts.org.uk](mailto:africa2024@berkshirescouts.org.uk). This is a group inbox and multiple members of the Core Team have the potential to pick up your message. If your question/request is sensitive, you are welcome to ask for an individual to contact you back to discuss.

### Expedition participation

- I need evidence of my participation to assist with my fundraising – can I have a document?
  - A [signed letter](#) template can be found on the website for young people. We have published as a Word document so that you can add your name and date but please do not change any other content.
  - If a leader requires a similar document, please ask via the email address above.

- How many people are going on the trip?
  - 57 young people and 34 leaders, collectively known as 'participants'.
- I am not able to attend all webinars and/or training events and camps – what is the impact of this?
  - Ideally, everyone will participate in all of these. However, we recognise that this is not always possible.
    - Webinars share important information and live participation enables you to hear first-hand and raise questions at a relevant time. While minutes are not taken, we record these to enable you to recap and catch-up as necessary.
    - Training events and camps are especially important and must be prioritised. Having run three Project Africa expeditions and other international trips previously, we know how essential they are and that is why the commitment to these was emphasised before signing-up for the expedition. They enable us to get to know each other and support each other best in-country – even if you know some, others definitely don't know you. They also build essential awareness, teamwork and practical skills for the expedition. Please make every effort to attend and discuss with Simon Pickett (Expedition Lead), if this really is not possible (please make initial contact via [africa2024@berkshirescouts.org.uk](mailto:africa2024@berkshirescouts.org.uk)).

<b>Leader teams</b>
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- What and who is the 'Core Team'?
  - The Core Team is responsible for the overall planning and organisation of the event, as well as making key decisions. The team are continuously working towards the event and meet at least monthly. The team includes leaders with a range of experience within Scouting, with previous international Scouting trips, including Project Africa, and with defined roles. The best way to contact the Core Team is by emailing [africa2024@berkshirescouts.org.uk](mailto:africa2024@berkshirescouts.org.uk) (you may discuss with an individual if you prefer, however, they may need to redirect you to the best contact).
    - Expedition Lead – Simon Pickett
    - Logistics – Phill Wood
    - Finance – Tony Phillips
    - Safety/Welfare – Ian May
    - Communications – Mick Stocks
    - Programme (in-country) Sarah Barrow
    - Programme (Berkshire 'join-in') & OSM – Sarah Dunnett
    - Training – Richard Rudman
    - Youth engagement – Conor Chippendale
    - Core Team Support – Liz Jenkin
- What and who is the 'Governance Group'?
  - The Governance Group has been appointed by our County Trustee Board to oversee governance aspects including finance, safety, and reputation. The Governance Group is chaired by Alex Sizeland, with Amy Brunsdon, Marcus Glew, and Xavier Davies. You can contact the Governance Group by emailing [africa2024@berkshirescouts.org.uk](mailto:africa2024@berkshirescouts.org.uk)

<b>Travel</b>
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- Where can I find flight details?

- See Bulletin 7 – drop-off/collection locations and times will be shared nearer the event.
- Flight assignments were also circulated and discussed in January 2024.
- Is there scope to change my flight assignment?
  - The assignments published in January 2024 were carefully considered and many factors needed to be taken into account. We believe everyone is now comfortable with their flights and we have extremely limited scope to make changes at this stage.
- What personal details have been used for the flight bookings?
  - Flights have been booked using the names and date of birth submitted via OSM in August 2023. If your passport has been renewed since then, no extra costs will be incurred. However, if there were any errors in your data entry in August 2023 or names have changed then the flight company will charge an administration fee which we will need to pass on to you.
- Will participants need a VISA to enter Malawi?
  - **\*\*** No, this is no longer necessary.
- What are the passport requirements to enter Malawi?
  - For British citizens, details can be found via the [UK Government Malawi travel advice page](#). For others, please check your national guidance.
  - Please ensure your passport has the necessary validity and, if necessary, get it renewed in plenty of time.
- Do I need to submit my passport details to the expedition team?
  - **\*\*** Yes, be sure to submit your passport details and document with photographs as per the Advance Passenger Information request of 26<sup>th</sup> March. **This must be completed by 19<sup>th</sup> April at the latest.**

<b>Safety and Welfare</b>
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- I have some personal safety or welfare concerns and/or questions. How can these be considered?
  - In the first instance, please email [africa2024@berkshirescouts.org.uk](mailto:africa2024@berkshirescouts.org.uk). If confidential, you are welcome to ask for Ian May to contact you directly to discuss.
  - Please ensure your personal details are accurate and complete on OSM, including medical details, allergies/dietary requirements and emergency contacts, etc.
- What safety and welfare provisions are being made for the expedition?
  - We will have comprehensive risk assessments in place covering all aspects of the expedition which will be shared with all of the leaders travelling with us. We are also ensuring we have a distribution of leaders with relevant first aid training, mental health first aid training and the ability to escalate major concerns to the professional in-county healthcare service if and when required (this was identified and visited by some of our leaders during the recce in 2023). We also have members of our leadership team who have professional emergency medical experience.
- Will I need vaccinations and/or antimalarials?
  - A range of vaccinations are recommended and malaria is a recognised risk in Malawi. While we can't offer personal medical advice, some general information was shared in the

[November webinar](#) (see recording at 40:40). We encourage you to discuss with your GP or travel clinic.

- **\*\*** What is Bilharzia / Schistosomiasis / Snail Fever? How will we manage the risk?
  - This is a parasitic disease whereby larvae living in contaminated freshwater enter through intact skin and spread around the body – with or without early symptoms, it can cause long-term organ damage if undetected and untreated. There is no vaccine but there is effective drug treatment on return to the UK if required.
  - The parasite is known to be present in and around Lake Malawi. While the expedition will have a boat trip on Lake Malawi, we have specifically decided not to participate in watersports, paddling or swimming. Water used for drinking, food preparation and washing will be purified. Everyone must take personal responsibility to avoid exposure to potentially contaminated water.
  - Please read the websites below so that you understand the potential infection, potential symptoms, timing of medical review (if exposed), and treatment (if detected).
    - <https://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice/disease-prevention-advice/schistosomiasis>
    - <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/28/schistosomiasis>
    - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/schistosomiasis/>
  
- **\*\*** The cholera vaccines appear to be in short supply.... Do I need it? If I want it, how can I get it?
  - As you discuss your vaccination requirements with your Travel Clinics/GPs and read the FitForTravel or TravelHealthPro websites, you will need to decide whether you want to have the cholera vaccine. While not routinely recommended for 'most travellers', it does appear in the 'some travellers' listing for Malawi. As an expedition team, we can not provide personal medical advice on this.
  - Cholera is currently present in Malawi and other African countries – this was a major concern in the Nov 2022 – April 2023 rainy season, however the incidence has been much lower during the 2023-2024 rainy season.
  - While we are stressing the importance of water purification, personal hygiene, careful food preparation and washing up to minimise the risk of contamination, we obviously can not exclude all potential illnesses.
  - For those of you choosing to have the vaccine, there are two potential options – Dukoral (2 doses) and Vaxchora (1 dose). Both options are administered as drinks and timing is important (discuss the details with your GP/clinic).
  - There is a long-term supply issue with Dukoral. We have spoken with the manufacturer, and they anticipate having it back in stock sometime April-June 2024. However, this timeline is not guaranteed, and it is not known if there will be sufficient for everyone.
  - While the cholera vaccines are usually free on the NHS via GP surgeries or may be included on an NHS prescription, they need to be paid for via private travel clinics (typically £60-80)
  - Many travel clinics have only been set-up to offer Dukoral (e.g. MASTA, Superdrug) and, as at 30<sup>th</sup> March 2024, we have been told that they do not currently have this in stock in any of their local clinics.
  - Vaxchora has limited availability, partly because some clinics have never offered it and partly due to the increased demand while Dukoral has been out-of-stock.
  - We have identified that Newdays Pharmacy offer Vaxchora – as at 30<sup>th</sup> March, their Reading and Eton branches have limited stock available. They will help if they can. If you identify other sources, please let us know by sending an email to: [africa2024@berkshirescouts.org.uk](mailto:africa2024@berkshirescouts.org.uk)

- What will it actually be like when we are in Malawi? Things like food, climate, toilets, culture?
  - We will be covering a lot of these aspects in our upcoming training camps. We are confident that it will be eye-opening, exciting, and a memorable positive experience for everyone. However, if you have any specific questions or concerns, please let us know.
- How will I personally spend my time while in-country?
  - Everyone will have the opportunity to participate in a range of project activities as well as rest and recreation. While being together much of the time, there will be two flight groups, three staggered expedition groups, multiple patrols and numerous opportunities to be with different people. More details will be shared during the upcoming training camps.

## Equipment and Uniform

- When will the UK Malawi 2024 expedition neckers be given out?
  - \*\* Leaders received neckers at the leaders event in December 2023 while young people received theirs at the March 2024 training camp. If you missed these, please ask at an upcoming event.
- Will we wear Union Flags on our uniform?
  - Union flag badges will be shared at a future camp (they are only worn on the official Explorer/Network/Leader shirts and not on the expedition t-shirts).
- Can we purchase additional expedition t-shirts?
  - Yes, these are available from the [expedition online shop](#) (a range of styles are available, male and female, cotton and wicking).
- Is there a kit list? Any tips?
  - Yes, this can be found on the [Malawi 2024 pages on the Berkshire Scouts website](#)
  - \*\* You must **not** take knives to Malawi.
  - \*\* Everyone will do their own clothes washing and should bring a small amount of travel wash. We will arrange bowls, clothes pegs and washing lines in-country for the everyone to share.
  - \*\* Everyone must have at least two no-touch water bottles (at least 500ml, named with a waterproof label – the drinking part must be covered and not need to be touched to use it)
  - \*\* You may take a small quantity of personal snacks and treats with you but they should be in sealed containers so as not to attract animals/insects. We'll share some suggestions in the coming couple of months e.g. on-the-go squash concentrates, seasonings, dried fruit, honey.
- There is a lot of kit showing on the online shop – what do I need to buy?
  - Beyond the expedition necker and t-shirt which we are being issued to all as part of their registration, all other items are optional.
- \*\* What is the baggage allowance and what happens if I exceed this?
  - Each of us has a generous allowance of:
    - 1 x 23kg hold bag / max sum of dimensions 158cm
    - 1 x 7kg cabin bag / max sum of dimensions 118cm

- Please weigh and measure your luggage before going to the airport as we must not exceed these limits. It is not possible to have multiple smaller bags.

## Finance

- I am concerned about the cost of the expedition, who can help?
  - Please discuss with your local Scout/Explorer leaders in the first instance to see if they can facilitate your fundraising.
  - Visit the [Malawi 2024 fundraising page](#) for hints, tips and inspiration to help you with your fundraising – a team have pulled together a fantastic resource for you.
- I can't make my next payment on time or in full, what should I do?
  - Please make every effort to make the payments as per the schedule. If this is not possible, please contact our Finance Lead, Tony Phillips, as soon as possible to discuss the situation (please make initial contact by emailing [africa2024@berkshirescouts.org.uk](mailto:africa2024@berkshirescouts.org.uk)).

## \*\* Additional benefits – awards and employability

- \*\* Can participation in Malawi 2024 contribute to other Scouting Awards?
  - Yes, please see the '[Top Awards](#)' summary which has been specifically collated and published for this trip. It considers a range of awards including the Scouting specific Platinum, Diamond and King's Scout Awards, the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, You Shape Award, Berkshire Join In Award, Project Africa Challenge Badge and a series of Explorer activity badges (global issues, international, fundraising, media relations and marketing, and community impact).
- \*\* How can I accrue 'nights away' for my Nights Away record and to contribute to that aspect of my Platinum, Diamond or King's Scout Award?
  - We are tracking the nights away for each person as they participate in the training camps and also the Malawi expedition itself. For Explorers and younger leaders, a record will be made available on our return to the UK after the trip.
- \*\* Can my participation in Malawi 2024 also help me applying for jobs, promotions etc?
  - Most definitely..... by the end of the expedition you'll have accrued numerous great experiences and competencies which you can discuss to demonstrate your transferable skills for the workplace. For example, teamwork, leadership, social responsibility, fundraising and budgeting, commitment, problem-solving, communication, cultural awareness..... The Scout website also includes a helpful section regarding [Scouts and Employability](#).