



## SNC NEWSLETTER

Issue 02 – November 2025



### Welcome to our second Newsletter

Momentum is building, Vocational Schools are opening, and with your support we're helping Nepal's young people have a chance in life with a "hand-up, not a hand-out", achieving more than ever. From schools opening their doors, to new fundraising expeditions being launched, it feels like our charity is truly flying.

- Dhangadhi Vocational School is now operational, with classrooms already alive and buzzing with students. Thanks to the huge fundraising efforts of our Everest Base Camp 2023 and Build & Trek 2024 teams, the school is now a reality. In fact, such was the urgency of need that training began even before the buildings were finished! Read more in our update in this edition;
- Fundraising momentum continues – Robin Quirt reports on the Tour du Mont Blanc, an epic 9-day challenge that pushed 8 of our community to their limits this summer, while raising vital funds for our next project;
- Looking ahead, fundraising expeditions are thriving – with Camino 2026, Build and Trek 2026, and Everest Base Camp 2026 teams already fully signed up and well into their training and fundraising. Despite some of the recent political unrest and snowstorms around Everest, our commitment remains absolute;
- Our support next year will further develop the Olgapuri Vocational School, which we funded and built in 2022, thanks to the Everest Base Camp 2022 and Build & Trek 2022 teams. Demand is so high that existing facilities are bursting at the seams. We are looking at new equipment, more teaching staff and doubling up the number of student places by early morning/late night courses so more young people gain life-changing skills;
- Behind the scenes, Gareth Thomas shares how we're strengthening our organisation to run even more effectively and deliver even greater support to Nepal;
- Future expeditions will benefit from matching by St. James's Place for their own Charitable Foundation, supporting Jamie's Farm, an organisation that transforms young lives in the UK;
- And looking further ahead – new expeditions for 2027 and 2028 are already in the pipeline.

Because these are truly life-changing adventures, we plan more than a year in advance to give every Adventurer the best possible experience.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you. Whether you're a donor, sponsor, adventurer, or organiser – you are helping transform lives in Nepal.

**Roger Owen**  
Founder, CEO and Trustee SNC

**£1.4m**  
raised since inception

**43**  
classrooms built

**2,083,725**  
student learning days  
in our classrooms

### WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE:



## TOUR DU MONT BLANC

by Robin Quirt

When the chance arose to take on the Tour du Mont Blanc with the same crew I'd shared Nepal with, it felt like an easy "yes." We already knew the rhythm of each other's steps, the way humour carries when energy dips, and the trust that builds on a trail. This time, though, we added new faces – Rachel & Will – with Will making his debut on a major trek (Rachel is a seasoned pro).

Straight away, we learned that Europe's mountains have their own way of testing you. Nepal had been vast, high, and thin-aired. Here, the challenges were different: relentless climbs, punishing descents, and weather that swung from blazing heat to snow and hail within hours. The pace was faster, the climbs steeper in bursts, and the variety – alpine meadows, rocky cols, ridge walks, cow-bells, and villages straight out of a postcard – made each day unique.

The highs were unforgettable. Reaching Col de la Seigne and stepping into Italy with the wind whipping at us. Sharing the best views of Mont Blanc's massifs along a high ridge walk. Stumbling across a rainbow over a glacier. Skipping stones at a high mountain lake, even as hail chased us down the path. And of course, the camaraderie: the

nicknames, the impromptu singing, the shared chocolate, and the laughter that made even the hardest climbs bearable.

But there were lows too. Knees pounded by long descents, heavy legs facing yet another "Col" that always turned out to be a mountain, sleepless dorms with 30 strangers (and snoring), and moments where weather and fatigue made us wonder what on earth we were doing. Those were the times that reminded us what resilience looks like: not heroics, but quiet steps, one after another.

As a group, we learned patience and the value of looking out for each other. For Will and I as a couple, it was about balancing support with space. Individually, it was about showing up every morning on time with rucksack on ready to go, even when your legs argued otherwise.

And Will? He coped brilliantly. He jumped in with good humour, kept pace with a grin, and thoroughly enjoyed the mountain food. Nine days, three countries, countless climbs, and one incredible team later, we ended tired, sore, and grateful. Most of all, we ended thankful – for the opportunity, the experience, the friendships, and

the generosity of everyone who supported our trek. Together, we've raised vital funds for Supporting Nepal's Children. Dhanyabad. I'd do it again in a heartbeat.

**Funds raised to date by the TMB2025 team: £17k (prior to any corporate matching for some of the participants)**



**"Most of all, we ended thankful – for the opportunity, the experience, the friendships, and the generosity of everyone who supported our trek."**



## FROM TREKKER TO TRUSTEE: A JOURNEY OF PURPOSE WITH SUPPORTING NEPAL'S CHILDREN

I'd heard about Supporting Nepal's Children (SNC) and its Build & Trek expedition for some time, and I committed to myself that I'd go. In 2022, I took the leap. I had a hunch I'd fall in love with Nepal, and I did. Within hours of landing, I knew this was a country I'd return to again and again. And within days, it was clear SNC wasn't just another charity; it was a passionate, tight-knit community doing deeply meaningful work. I knew I wanted in.

I was inspired by founder Roger's story of summiting Everest in 2012, but even more so by his enduring commitment to supporting young people in Nepal. His passion was infectious, and a bond quickly formed. By the end of that first expedition, I had two certainties: I'd come back with my son, and I'd find a way to contribute more meaningfully to SNC's mission.

As a business owner and coach, I naturally ask questions about how organisations operate. It didn't take long to realise that SNC was running, predominantly, on the immense goodwill of the three dedicated founders: Roger, Hazel, and Nadine. The passion was still there, but I sensed they were overstretched, and I knew I could help.

Roger invited me to facilitate a trustee meeting to review the charity's goals and structure. That one meeting became the first step in what has been an incredibly rewarding journey, and one that's still only just begun.

Today, I'm honoured to serve as a trustee, focusing on strategy and operations. Together, we've made some transformational changes over the past year:

- **Vision and Mission:** We now have a clear, inspiring mission proudly featured on our website.
- **Team Growth:** We've welcomed additional talented volunteers into clearly defined roles.
- **Professional Systems:** We've implemented time-saving, safe processes that support sustainable growth.
- **Structured Meetings:** We've introduced an organised communications and action-tracking system.
- **Alumni Engagement:** We're harnessing the power of past participants to broaden our supporter base.
- **Supporter Updates:** We now regularly share updates on our impact and upcoming events.

- **Expanded Expeditions:** We offer more accessible UK and European-based expeditions alongside our Nepal trips.
- **Fully Booked 2026 Expeditions:** Our flagship Build and Trek and Everest Base Camp experiences are already full, and planning is underway for 2027.

Most importantly, **the fun is back**, along with the sense of purpose. Our work is truly making a difference. Whether you join us on an expedition or support us from afar, know this: we are genuinely giving young people in Nepal greater choices through access to quality education and vocational skills. And we're just getting started.

by Gareth Thomas  
Trustee





## FROM VISION TO REALITY IN DHANGADHI

Thanks to the incredible commitment and fund raising of our Build & Trek 2024 team and Everest Base Camp 2023 team, we are thrilled to share the inspiring progress at the **new Vocational School in Dhangadhi**. What began with bricks, sweat, and laughter last October is now a thriving centre for opportunity and change.

### The Build & Trek Impact

Last year's team made a huge physical contribution, 64 worker-days of labour alongside skilled Nepali builders, helping lay the groundwork for this vital new facility. Beyond cement and sand, they built friendships, created memories, and even levelled a cricket pitch for the local children. A part of their hearts remains in Dhangadhi.

School buildings are now **in use**, with furniture and amenities in place. Tools and equipment have been brought in from Olgapuri, ensuring students have the resources they need to thrive.

- **March 2025:** The first satellite training programmes began, and already **82 individuals** have benefited, gaining practical skills in Electrical and Plumbing.

- **July 2025:** A new intake was announced, expanding courses to **Electrical, Plumbing, and Welding**. They are about to graduate, with more students ready to start their own training. Four trades will eventually be taught, Electrical, Plumbing, Carpentry, and Welding, with potential to expand into Agricultural training, thanks to the ample land available at the site.
- **2025–26 Goal:** Currently to embed and train at least **240 students** at the new school, equipping them with skills for independence, employment, and brighter futures. To prepare the way and prepare more classrooms and workshops for further training courses and intakes of young students for the future.

None of this would have been possible without the support of our fundraisers, sponsors, and community. Together, you are building hope and transforming young lives.



## HOW OUR VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

### Raj Gharti

At 21 years of age, Raj Gharti from Surkhet faced immense hardships early in life. Losing his father at the age of 8, he grew up with his mother and brothers.

Unable to continue his formal education, Raj had no option but to work as a labourer to support himself.

In January 2023, Raj seized an opportunity to transform his life when he enrolled in the plumbing trade program at Olgapuri Vocational School. Today, he is employed by Kalila Construction in Pokhara, earning a monthly income of Rs. 27,000 (£146) and building a brighter future for himself.



### Prem Dhami

Prem is 35 years old from Dhangadhi, left school after grade 10 due to financial struggles and worked in Malaysia for three years, returning to Nepal with little savings.

He joined Olgapuri Vocational School in December 2023 in welding training, where his dedication and quick learning stood out.

Now working on metal truss projects, Prem earns up to Rs. 35,000 a month (£189), supporting his family and saving to start his own welding workshop.



### Nilam Tharu

Nilam is 25 years old is from Bardiya who grew up in a family struggling with financial hardships. Forced to leave school after grade 4 due to illness, Nilam supported her family of five by doing cutting and stitching work at home, even teaching others her skills.

When a family member in a co-operative suggested a vocational training opportunity in tailoring, Nilam eagerly enrolled, hoping to improve her family's situation.

During the training at Olgapuri Vocational School in 2023, she found not only valuable skills but also a sense of belonging with her "second family."

Nilam is now working in Arma Fashion Industry Pvt. Ltd. (in Kathmandu) earning almost Rs. 30,000 a month (£162).



With kind permission of the Nepal Youth Foundation

## KEEP AN EYE OPEN FOR OUR UP-AND-COMING ADVENTURES

Come and join us.  
Register your interest now!

Each year we run at least two expeditions to the UK, Europe and/or Nepal to raise funds for our projects. These events are meticulously planned to ensure you have the best, safest and most memorable experience with us.

2026 events – our Camino de Santiago, Build & Trek and Everest Base Camp events are already fully subscribed.

### 2027 AND 2028 EVENTS



#### Camino de Santiago 2027 – Spain

The iconic trek over the Basque Country to the legendary city of Santiago de Compostela. Seven days in total from the UK with five full days of trekking around 20-25 km per day. Normally March/April. Approx. cost £990.

**NOW ACCEPTING BOOKINGS**



*Photo by Migle Siauciulyte on Unsplash*

#### West Highland Way Experience and Ben Nevis Climb 2027 – Scotland

A trek over seven days that includes the most exciting parts of the WHW through the mountains, culminating (depending on weather conditions and for those who still have energy!) in an ascent of Ben Nevis (1,345m). Normally April. Approx cost £850.

**NOW ACCEPTING BOOKINGS**



#### Build & Trek 2027 – Nepal

A 15-day expedition to one of our projects in Nepal where you will work on our building site, alongside Nepali builders, creating the project you have helped to fund. We then take you trekking through the magical Himalayas amongst the giant 8,000m peaks and some of the highest mountains on earth. Normally Oct/Nov. Approx. cost £2,900.

**NOW ACCEPTING BOOKINGS**



#### Everest Base Camp 2028 – Nepal

A 20-day expedition to the highest peak on Earth and an experience you will never forget. Our toughest expedition. You will meet climbers who have summited Everest and will be fully supported by our Sherpa team throughout, as we climb steadily towards EBC at 5,364m making sure we acclimatise safely and surely. Normally Oct/Nov. Approx cost £3,395.

**NOW ACCEPTING BOOKINGS**

Application and place confirmation for these events is normally 9-15 months ahead, depending on the destination. This is so that we can ensure you know all about the event, understand the requirements and have met the necessary insurance and medical requirements. You should also have attended training weekend(s) designed to ensure you meet the team and are fully prepared for your adventure and can start your fundraising efforts. Every expedition carries an expectation that participants will raise valuable funds for our projects. All costs are paid by the participant so that we maximise the sponsorship raised towards our projects.

All costs are for guidance and typically cover accommodation, half board, and some lunches. They exclude flights and insurance.

Sign up now and join our mailing list by calling Roger Owen on 07796 191635 or emailing [rogerjowen@gmail.com](mailto:rogerjowen@gmail.com) who will be very happy to give you more details.

FOLLOW US ON OUR SOCIAL NETWORKS



Help us to help the young people of Nepal grow, thrive and create a fulfilling future.

There are a number of ways to support our projects:

- a regular monthly, quarterly or yearly donation
- a one-off donation

To donate click here, or scan the QR code.

SCAN ME

