



Alton Climate Action Network

FOOD EVERY DAY!
Together we can
(Patrick Kamzitu)



THE GUMBI ALTON PERMACULTURE PROJECT (GAPP)

“Thank you” newsletter to all donors – May 2025

None of this would be possible without your support

GAPP's aims for 2025 are:

- To finish the development of all the infrastructure on the GAPP demonstration farm, including the training kitchen.
- To launch the GAPP demonstration farm as a training centre for local farmers – **on target for July!**
- To support more Gumbi farmers to use permaculture methods in their homestead gardens

The GAPP farm has been a hive of activity in the 2 months since our last newsletter in February and the team have been very busy.

1. Learning how to plan and deliver permaculture and cookery training courses

In April, the GAPP team attended a 7-day Training the Trainers and Cookery Course at the Permaculture Paradise Institute in Mchinji, with Luwayo and Grace Biswick.



Martin Pute,
Precious
Chiphanzi.
Milica Hallod,
Ivy Chibozo,
Eveless George,
Edwin Mponela

All proudly
displaying their
certificates of
completion of the
Training the Trainers
course.



The team also had a 2-day cookery course at the Permaculture Paradise Institute. The training courses at the GAPP farm will demonstrate cookery with a diverse range of organic crops – in the farm’s leading-edge all-solar-powered training kitchen funded by a major donor (see page 4).

2. Growing a wide range of crops



Organic zero-tillage gardening at GAPP – egg plants (aubergines)

Diverse, mixed planting for Integrated Pest Management: it could not be more different from monoculture farming.



This message arrived on 18 April, from Martin the lead farmer at GAPP:

“Let me comment on that point .. within a short period of time, we have managed to grow vegetables, for today we used our own vegetables from GAPP during lunch time. We were 18 in totally including 4 builders and 5 solar insulation team, as well as all young farmers from all homesteads under GAPP.”



3. Making compost – these guys work so hard!

Compost is the life blood of organic permaculture. The team have recently created a large new compost area at the farm, using plant material from the farm enriched with animal manure.



4. Fencing the whole site

The 2.5-acre demonstration farm is now fenced (very hard work) and secured, with a very impressive gate. Signage will follow soon.



"We all work very hard at GAPP because of your support ... we want to repay your generosity ..." A GAPP farmer.

Permaculture transforms lives

5. The Totally-Solar-Powered Training Kitchen



Three solar induction Maksol Cookers, with 2 plates each, will be delivered from Uganda later in May. They will be a first for Malawi as the solar cookers are used inside buildings and not outside. They will enable 6 farmers to use the cookers at the same time, to learn how to make nutritious meals from the organic produce they will grow on their own homestead plots after their permaculture training course.



The Gumbi Village Chief and Elders and Patrick Kamzitu in the training kitchen, with solar equipment installed behind them



Installing the huge 850W solar panels on the training kitchen roof. The whole of the GAPP site now has solar-generated electricity.

6. Spreading the message



In March, the Gumbi Chief, Mr Edwin Mponela, aka Mr Gumbi, convened a meeting of the chiefs from the surrounding villages. Permaculture farmer Samuel Martin talked to them about how sustainable farming methods could greatly improve their food supply and asked them to encourage farmers in their communities to attend the training courses at GAPP starting soon.

We are delighted that Mr Edwin is now working very closely with the GAPP farm team.

All the funds raised (nearly £8,000) from ACAN's Zoom event in November 2024 have now been spent on the farm infrastructure, the training the trainers course, and paying a core farm staff.

We would love to be able to give farmers attending the GAPP training courses starting in July some tools (a hoe, spade, shovel and wheelbarrow). All donations very welcome.

<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/18131#!/DonationDetails>

ACAN's next major fundraising target is £5,000 for a mechanically-dug borehole on the farm and £2,000 for associated piping and plumbing, including to the 4 rondavels for accommodation.

<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/18131#!/DonationDetails>

"We have proper financial management systems here for GAPP, and are keeping careful financial records. The team is sharing these responsibilities and would like to assure ACAN donors that every penny sent is accounted for." James Gomani, GAPP financial monitoring