



Alton Climate Action Network

FOOD EVERY DAY!

Together we can

(Patrick Kamzitu)



The Gumbi Permaculture Community Training Centre (The renamed Gumbi Alton Permaculture Project - GAPP)

“Thank you” newsletter – July 2025

None of this would be possible without your support



The PCTC farming team and homestead farmers pictured with Luwayo Biswick, Founder Director of the Permaculture Paradise Institute, during a recent supervision visit.

GAPP has changed its name to the “Permaculture Community Training Centre” (PCTC) to make it clear that it is a training centre serving the community long term, and not a finite project. From August 2025 onwards, it will train farmers in the 50 villages around Gumbi in Nambuma District.

NB The ACAN and GEF logos will be on signage and printed materials at PCTC.

Permaculture can provide a secure food supply

- Food price inflation in Malawi is over 25% year on year, and far higher for imported food. For food to be affordable, Malawians need to become self-sufficient, growing a wide range of nutritious indigenous crops.
- One third of Malawians experience food shortages (source Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee annual reports). Prolonged dry spells due to climate instability cause failure of harvests in Malawi because the staple maize is a rain-fed crop.

NEXT PAGES – ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE THE MAY NEWSLETTER

“The training centre has been completely transformed with so much progress as compared to the last time I visited ...” Luwayo Biswick, Founder Director Permaculture Paradise Institute, report of supervision visit, 8 July 2025

1. Solar-powered cooking stoves



After many months of planning, two Maksol solar-powered, induction hob stoves with battery storage, manufactured in Uganda, were installed in the PCTC training kitchen at the end of June. The photo shows Paul Soddo, the CEO of Intellisys, and solar technician Brave cooking the first nutritious meal! These solar-powered stoves enable CLEAN COOKING on the farm - no felling of precious trees, no polluting emissions. Our heartfelt thanks to our major donor for both funding and organising this major milestone, not just for PCTC but for Malawi.

2. The 4 rondavels offering accommodation to visitors are now beautifully furnished



The furniture is made by local craftsmen

3. Crops and more crops – ready for the first training course in August

“The cassava in zone 3 looks good, a perfect example of dry land permaculture ... this represents a classic example of how ... the local community could replicate the model in the villages with very limited access to water for irrigation.” Luwayo Biswick, Permaculture Paradise Institute, Supervision Visit 8th July 2025.



From a Whats App message from lead farmer Martin Thole, 2nd July: “Hello Jenny, I have proof that Permaculture is only way of life we need to teach - look how at PCTC this morning, we harvested more tomatoes that we planted 3 months ago, also grown organically.”



Above left: Looking towards the new gate

Left: New water storage tank, behind it is the new outdoor seating area, re-roofed classroom and to the right the start of the “edible car park”.

Below: the new “edible car park”

4. **Next page:** farm buildings upgraded and completed

Composting toilets have been completed, the classroom roof replaced, the reservoir upgraded (this will become a fish pond), new additional water storage provided, and there is a new outdoor seating and teaching area.





ALL READY FOR THE FIRST TRAINING COURSE IN AUGUST!

A recent generous donation of £400 will enable us to give farmers attending the PCTC training courses this year a starter pack of seeds, plants and tools.

All donations however small are very welcome and will be used with care.

<https://altonclimatenetwork.org.uk/donate/>

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 providing accommodation. <https://altonclimatenetwork.org.uk/donate/>

"We have proper financial management systems here for PCTC, 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, PCTC/GEF financial monitoring

AND FINALLY....

On behalf of PCTC, ACAN is a partner in the African Social Enterprise Workshop's <https://aseworkshop.com/> 7th international Sustaining Impact Summit online conference at the end of August. We will be giving a short presentation on day 1 of the conference.

