

NEPAL LEPROSY TRUST

Notes for short term visitors to Lalgadh Leprosy Services Centre

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Practicalities

Financial Matters (Approx exchange rate at Jan 2016: £1 = 138 rupees, \$1 = 107 rupees)

- Short-term visitors are not paid an allowance by Nepal Leprosy Trust and will have to pay for their own costs. For funding ideas see below. The major cost is likely to be the airfare to and from Nepal – approx.£600 from the UK. A refundable deposit of £100 should be sent to the UK office of NLT prior to departure (repaid after the visitor’s return after the deduction of any unpaid costs) along with an admin charge of £95 to cover administrative costs in the UK and Nepal (including a DBS check for UK citizens). Whilst staying at Lalgadh Leprosy Services Centre (LLSC), there is a board and lodging charge which is currently \$17 per day for students and \$20 for non-students. This will increase in line with rising costs. This charge includes food, lodging, laundry, your support by NLT staff, the organization and management of your visit, field observation, training, etc.
- You can change Sterling or Dollar Travellers Cheques or cash easily in Kathmandu and Pokhara. Credit cards can be used to obtain currency at some banks and cash points. However, if you are flying straight to Lalgadh without time in Kathmandu, you should change some money inside the main airport at Kathmandu (in the Immigration Hall). UK currency notes should be undamaged, as Nepali banks will not accept them if they are torn. Nepali Rupees are not obtainable in UK. You can also change a few dollars or sterling pounds in the LLSC office if necessary. It is useful to have dollar notes with you (see below “Travel - within Nepal” and “Accommodation and Food”)

Visas

Tourist

- You will need a tourist visa for Nepal. NLT has copies of visa forms in the UK office or you can download them from <http://www.nepembassy.org.uk/downloadables/visaform.pdf> . The following costs are correct at Jan 2016: a 15 day visa is £20, a 30-day visa is £35, and a 90 day visa is £75. To organise this in the UK, you can apply by post or visit the Nepali embassy in person. Alternatively you can acquire your visa at Kathmandu airport for which you should take a passport sized photo with you. If you are staying for more than two months the visa can be extended in Kathmandu or Pokhara. The visa fee rate for longer stays may be more expensive at the airport.
- **Work Restrictions**
Under Nepali Government rules, non-Nepalis require the equivalent of a work permit before they may undertake work within the country. You will not have a work permit and will therefore not be taking up a work role: you will be *visiting* NLT’s projects in order to *observe* and *learn*. You will also have an opportunity to share in the life of NLT and the community. When filling out the visa form please put the purpose of visit as ‘visiting friends’.

Travel - to Nepal

- For travel arrangements NLT has more recently used online booking successfully. We have used Gulf, and Qatar which fly via the Middle East, and Jet Airways which flies via Delhi. These have a 30kg allowance. Etihad Airways is apparently good and Turkish Airways works OK but only has a 20kg luggage allowance. Allow time for booking your flights, particularly during the trekking seasons.
- You will be met by an NLT representative (carrying a card with your name or "NLT") in an NLT vehicle at Kathmandu airport. You may find when you step out of the airport that you are beset by young Nepalis who want to carry your bags - please ignore them.
- Before you arrange your flights, you MUST check your proposed dates with your contact in NLT to ensure that the dates are convenient. By all means check airlines for availability, but do NOT finalise bookings until you have clearance from NLT.
- You are advised to check the British Embassy (Nepal) website before you travel to obtain up-to-date travel and security advice - <http://www.britain.gov.np/>, <http://blogs.fco.gov.uk/www.ukinnepal.fco.gov.uk/en>

Travel - within Nepal

- The journey from Kathmandu to Lalagadh is about 7-8 hours by bus (however safety depends on the political situation), 6-7 hours by land rover, or half an hour by plane to Janakpur plus 1 hour from Janakpur to Lalagadh by land rover. The airfare is approx. US\$120 for a single flight which should be paid in dollars. Please bring dollar currency to pay for the flight there and back (about \$240). NLT will book your flight to Janakpur which will usually be the day after your arrival (or as soon as possible).
- NOTE: Some internal flights only allow 15kgs of luggage BUT excess baggage costs on internal flights are low. You can leave stuff in Kathmandu while you are at Lalagadh, or arrange for items acquired at Lalagadh to be sent up to Kathmandu by road before you fly yourself. Check first.
- For domestic flights departing Kathmandu, there is a 170 Nepali Rupee departure tax. For domestic flights departing Janakpur, the tax is 142 Nepali Rupees. This is subject to change.

Insurance

- You must arrange your own medical insurance to cover illness or accident. A travel insurance policy can be obtained through your travel agent, or online through www.bannergroup.com. Try <http://www.clubdirect.com> for a quick quote. Make sure you get a decent policy that includes loss of flight ticket costs as standard. A copy of your policy should be lodged in the UK office before you go.

About Lalagadh Leprosy Service Centre

Cultural Considerations

- For cultural reasons, girls need to wear loose tops over loose trousers, or long skirts (**preferably ankle length but certainly well below the knee**). Tee shirts and blouses should not be tight and should have short sleeves for comfort. If you are planning to wear thin skirts then you will probably need an underskirt. **For nurses in the hospital wards, white long sleeved tops and trousers are preferred.** A long thin cotton scarf is useful as a cover-up when required. Ready-made sari petticoats are cheap in Kathmandu and have the advantage of being all cotton and therefore cooler when it is hot. Women's traditional Nepali dress can also be obtained in Janakpur or Bardibas (3km from Lalgadh Leprosy Service Centre). It costs approx US\$8-15 for the fabric and tailoring. The usual time required is 7-10 days.
- As touching people of the opposite sex is generally not culturally acceptable, do not expect everyone to shake hands. Some may proffer a hand – just follow their lead.
- Please try not to be exclusive in relationships. Please make every effort to interact with all members of the team, not just one another.
- Please refrain from any activity that could be construed as romantic interest toward a national. Certain activities that seem innocuous in our own culture may be inappropriate in Nepal.

Other unusual habits

- People will spit all the time, anywhere!
- People will wipe their own and their children's noses with saris: they think our use of a handkerchief is unhygienic – we put it in our pockets!
- People will stare at you. Smile back and say 'Namaste'.

Climate

- For most of the year the weather at Lalgadh is hot or very hot. During the monsoon the humidity is high and can be very draining. May to July is extremely hot. Nevertheless, it can be cool at night in winter (December - February) and cold during January, so be sure to bring at least one jumper. Kathmandu can be very cold in winter. Heating in the houses is poor or non-existent.

Bugs and things

Centipedes (splayed legs) are poisonous. Do not touch hairy caterpillars. If stung by a scorpion seek help immediately from hospital staff

Mosquitoes – wear long clothing 1 hr before dusk. Put on repellent. Sleep under a net. Should take antimalarials especially during the monsoon period (June to September).

Hairy caterpillars – look furry and soft. Each hair contains irritant chemicals. If touched, pick hairs out one by one with pointed tweezers. Don't use eyebrow tweezers as they will squeeze the irritant further in. If irritation persists take paracetamol or piriton.

Ants – will be attracted to any sweet food and crumbs. Make sure all food is securely covered and in the fridge or screened cupboard.

Scorpions – emerge at night. Seek staff advice if stung. Shake shoes before putting on in the morning.

Spiders – dangerous ones are rare and virtually all those you will meet in the accommodation are harmless, even if they are big. In the extremely unlikely event of a bite, treat with cold compresses and antihistamines if bad. An area of spreading redness or pus is an early sign of a bite

Centipedes and millipedes – millipedes are rounded with legs tucked under and are harmless; centipedes have a venomous bite. Legs are splayed out.

Snakes are not seen often but it is important to be careful when walking around, especially at night. **ALWAYS carry a TORCH when moving around at night** – even inside the house as unexpected power cuts can leave you stranded. If you see a snake, stay away and alert a member of staff. The two main poisonous varieties are Krait and Cobra. Krait are fairly docile but Cobra can be aggressive so stay away!

Accommodation

- There will be a charge per day at Lalgadh for accommodation, food, etc of about US\$12 (this is raised from time to time). This includes breakfast, lunch and dinner as well as general support, laundry, etc. Payment for this is in US dollars, GP sterling pounds, or Nepali Rupees. It is also possible to arrange electronic transfer of money.
- Sheets, warm blankets, towels, pillows, mosquito nets, toilet paper, tea, coffee, sugar, and milk powder are provided. If you run out of toilet paper, washing up liquid etc. Asha Pradhan in the office is the contact. Asha speaks good English. Go to her for anything.
- Volunteer accommodation is self contained with fridge, gas hob, and power points. All doors and windows have fly screens. Children's play equipment is located nearby to the accommodation. Water filters are provided in the rooms, and bottled water is available at meals.
- There are snakes, ants, spiders, geckos, centipedes, scorpions and various flying bugs. Spiders and geckos are harmless so be nice to them. Snakes, ants, scorpions and centipedes can bite. Knockdown spray is provided in your accommodation and it is advisable to keep windows and doors closed after dusk. Mosquito nets are provided and have been treated with permethrin.
- There is a ban on alcohol at LLSC and we also ask that you do not smoke.
- Accommodation will be arranged for you for your first night(s) in Kathmandu in a small hotel in Thamel or Patan. The cost will be around £10-£20 per night. Please inform Mike Houghton in the Richmond office if you wish to make other arrangements.
- Meal times are adjustable, but generally at 7.30am, 12.30pm and 7pm unless told otherwise. Most meals are taken in the Training Centre dining room to help our staff. If you have food related requests speak to Asha.
- Rubbish is collected daily from outside your front door before 8 a.m.
- Household maintenance – contact the Lalgadh Office

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The following list of accommodation in Kathmandu is for guidance only and prices may have risen or the hotels closed: 			
Hotel	Single/ night	Double /night	Comments
Hotel Tradition	\$16 plus 10% tax	\$18 plus 10% tax	Located in Thamel, View from the top floor is amazing.
Hotel Clarion		\$25	Comfortable and convenient. Located in Jawalakele.
Summit	€55 plus VAT	€88 plus VAT	Located in Patan. With swimming pool, restaurant, beautician, bar
Tibet Guest House	25 Euros		Located in Thamel. Collects visitors from Airport.
Goshen Guest House (Tel: 01 5549714 & 01 5553173	NRs 490		Near British Gurkha camp near Jawalakele. Run by a Christian Nepali Lady and is comfortable and friendly. A shared kitchen means that guests can make breakfast, tea and coffee as required, and record this for payment later. Wireless access is also available.

Meals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meals are basic and include daal bhat (rice, curry, lentil soup, pickles and popadums) twice a day (lunch and dinner) Note that some parts of the meal tends to be quite spicy, usually fried and there is no western alternative. The meals are vegetarian- friendly as the meat is served separately, eg mutton (goat), chicken or fish. Breakfast varies, such as chapatti with boiled egg, or sweet rice with curry, or fried bread with potato. White sliced bread may be available for breakfast. Breakfast is usually delivered to your accommodation unless otherwise instructed, but other meals are usually eaten in the Training Centre dining room. If you like Marmite, cheese spread, Ryvita, muesli, etc then bring supplies from the UK, or plan a shopping trip in Kathmandu. Honey and cornflakes are available locally in Bardibas, and peanut butter is available in Janakpur. Water at LLSC is fairly clean but please boil and filter water for drinking and cleaning teeth. Facilities for boiling and filtering are available within the accommodation. If you require fresh buffalo milk you need to ask the cook. Yogurt and fruit (usually apple, banana or mandarin) are available at most meals.

Medical

We advise you to have the recommended vaccinations below. You should show this list to your nurse several months before you travel.

* BCG (for TB);	* Polio
Hepatitis A	Rabies
Hepatitis B	* Tetanus with adult diphtheria
Japanese encephalitis	* Typhoid
Meningitis	Antimalarials (Chloroquine 150g and Proguanil 100g) are also essential

You might be able to get some immunisations from your own GP through the NHS (those marked with a *), the others you usually have to pay for. They can also be arranged through Interhealth. N.B. You will need to take a record card of your immunisations to Nepal with you.

If you are unwell at LLSC you can ask one of the doctors to refer you for a stool test from the laboratory.

Tummy problems are probably the most common issue for visitors and are not usually acquired at Lalgadh itself but either before reaching Lalgadh or during visits to the surrounding areas. Do be careful with water at all times in Nepal, and we recommend NOT eating salad provided by restaurants as a side dish. The water at Lalgadh is fairly clean, but should be boiled and filtered to be safe. Use this filtered water for teeth cleaning as well. The ladies that keep the accommodation clean normally make sure that filtered water is available. When out and about, be wary of bottled water from street vendors, etc, and try and buy from proper shops only. It is best to carry a bottle of clean water with you for drinking when out on field trips, shopping trips, etc. Bottled Coca Cola is a safe back-up drink and is available in most places.

When eating out, particularly on the road, freshly cooked Nepali food (rice, vegetables, etc) is probably safer than most other foods. The safest food is freshly cooked, HOT food. At Lalgadh you will generally eat in the Training dining room where the food is put out in a buffet style at set times. The staff are careful and visitors do not generally get ill from this, but avoiding uncooked salad (tomatos, etc) is advisable. Do make sure you know the meal times and be on time. If you are going to be somewhere else for a meal, or late, please keep the admin office informed so that they can cancel your food for that meal or keep it available for you later.

Location of Lalgadh Leprosy Service Centre



LLSC is located approx 30km from Janakpur

Plan of the compound



The compound of Lalgadh Leprosy Services Centre is about 17 acres and is on the Eastern bank of the Ratu River about 1km north of the East-West Highway.

The nearest small town is Bardibas, west of the Ratu River and about 4km away. Basic foodstuffs can be obtained there.

Places to visit nearby to LLSC	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To take a trip to Janakpur, (if the political situation allows) ask in Support Services when the next vehicle is going and if there is space for you. Remember to ask when they will pick you up! • Walks: Check with staff for safety. Watch for snakes, etc, during monsoon period – June/early October. Possible targets for a walk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tulasi – a small village, about 2 hours return ○ Bardibas (café half way on right) This is a 3km walk from Lalgadh. 	
Shops: Janakpur for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet • Clothes/flip flops etc. • Some imported goods • Peanut butter • Shampoo, conditioner etc. • Women’s Skill Development Centre 	Shops: Bardibas for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit/vegetables • Honey • Cornflakes • Soft drinks • Washing powder • Local goods • Traditional Nepali dress
Shops: Outside gate, on path to road for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noodles • Soft drinks • Biscuits 	

Preparations

You will need/ Items to bring	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passport and a spare passport photo for the visa • Locks for luggage • A TORCH and batteries (so that you do not step on a scorpion or a snake in the dark!) • A water bottle • Dark sunglasses, sun hat, and insect repellent • Not so vital to life: an umbrella (June to October) • Flip flops (can buy in Nepal) • Pair of smart shoes/sandals • Pictures of home and family – make good conversation topics in Nepal! • Tampax, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEET based mosquito repellent • Travel wash • Sun cream – high factor and aftersun • Trainers • Thin, loose cotton clothes – cooler in hot weather (including underwear – bigger pants are cooler). • Camera , spare films and batteries • LLSC would be very grateful for items such as – surgical gloves, suturing needles, scalp-vein “butterfly” needles, IV cannulas, otoscope, ophthalmoscope, steristrips, crepe bandages, small operating theatre instruments, etc. If you are uncertain about items, please contact us on

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal plug – 2 pin (round prongs) • Diarolite • Hobbies – i.e. embroidery, knitting, large puzzle, cards • Plenty of books • Small gifts for Nepalis – they like postcards of England, and of animals; tea towels; small ornaments (try Oxfam) • Money belt • Alarm clock 	<p>info@nlt.org.uk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anything you crave i.e. chocolate, biscuits, sweets, marmite, etc. • Earplugs – fan and cicadas can be quite noisy • Clothes pegs • Travel wash/laundry liquid • Travel iron if needed • Laptop with wireless access – good for organising photos, writing up stories, playing games, communicating, etc. • The UK office may also ask if you are able to take items for NLT in your luggage. This can be enormously helpful to NLT.
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Recommended Reading

(all available used on www.amazon.co.uk):

- Lonely Planet Guide to Nepal – Hugh Finlay
Publisher: Lonely Planet Publications
- The Travellers' Good Health Guide – Ted Lankester
Publisher: Sheldon Press
- Pain: The gift nobody wants: Memoirs of the World's leading leprosy Surgeon – Paul Brand
Publisher: Zondervan
- Disabled Village Children- David Werner

Publications

When you return to the UK we would like a 2 page report of your time at LLSC. This may be used for our newsletter as we rely on regular up to date information. This could contain observations of the people, hospital, culture and anecdotes, etc

Please send us copies of any nice photos you may have and any interesting anecdotes and stories.

If you write any article or report on your visit to Lalgadh for outside publication (however small the circulation), you must submit the article to NLT before publication or circulation.

Contact People



Dambar Ale
Programme
Director



Asha Pradhan



Dr Graeme with
his wife Meena



Suman Tamang
(Admin)

Communications

- You can receive mail at Lalgadh but allow at least 3 weeks for letters to arrive. Use the Kathmandu office address (P.O. Box 96, Kathmandu, Nepal)
- E-mail is also possible and there is limited internet access in the office block. All internet or email access is dependant on electricity being available and this can be very irregular at times so you may need to be patient. It is also important to remember that Lalgadh is a busy place with it's own work and email to deal with so you will need to fit in with the other demands on this resource. If you ask a member of staff you may be able to use their e-mail account.
- Wireless internet is available and generally has faster access than the landline - **Bring your laptop or netbook if you can.**
- Lalgadh Leprosy Service Centre has a facebook page.

The phone/fax no. for Lalgadh hospital is: 00977 41620467 or 00977 41620182 (from UK). The Kathmandu office phone/fax is: 00977 15151622 or 00977 15151322. If you are ringing from within Nepal, Lalgadh is 041 620467 or 041 620182. For contacting Kathmandu personnel out of hours (perhaps when arrival plans are not working at Kathmandu Airport), ring Mr Kamal Shrestha at home on 01 5530854, or mobile: 98510 75789.

Local network SIM cards for mobile phones are available in Nepal and our NLT staff can advise. The time difference is GMT+5 3/4 hours (e.g. 8 am GMT = 1.45 pm in Nepal). Nepalis go to bed early (before 9 pm Nepali time) so be careful not to ring at an unsociable Nepali time. Some phone companies provide cheaper rates when ringing from the UK, eg 'Just Dial' and 'Alpha Telecom' www.alphatelecom.com have provided this service via a prefix number that you can add. Calls will come up on your standard bill with your existing supplier, but will be charged at the cheaper rates.

If you need to visit the Kathmandu office while in Kathmandu, it is located in Satdobato on the Chapaguan Road about half a km south of its junction with the Ring Road in Lalitpur. It is on the right hand side as you travel south

Useful Nepali Phrases	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most staff at LLSC speak English, however it is sure to put a smile on their faces if you can speak a few phrases! Most patients of LLSC speak the local dialect Maithili. • There are some good language lessons on youtube.com such as 'Nepali Language Lesson: Speak the way they do on top of the world'. Below are some basic phrases (contributed by past visitors) to get you going. 	
English	Nepali
Hello	Namaste (with hands together pointing up just below and in front of your chin)
How are you today?	Tapailaai aja kasto chha?
I am fine	Malaai sanchai chha.
And you?	Tapailaai?
What is your name?	Tapaaiko naam ke ho?
My name is _____.	Mero naam _____ ho.
I am from Australia	Mero gaar Australia ho.
I can speak a little Nepali	Malai Nepali bolna aliali ounchaa
I am happy/pleased to meet you	Tapailaai beterah cusilaagio
This is tasty/delicious	Yo miTho chha
Yes	Ho
No	Naai
Thankyou	Dhanyebaad
What time is it now?	Aile kati bajyo?
One o'clock	Ek bajyo
Half past one o'clock	saaDhe ek bajyo
1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10	Ek, dui, tin, char, paach, chha, saat, aaTh, nau, dos
Good	Raamro
Sorry	Maaph garnus
Please say it slowly	Bistaarai bhannus
Spicy	Piro
This is very spicy	Yo dherai piro chha
To go	Jaanu
Where do you work?	Tapai kaha kaam garnuhunchha?
Elder sister/ younger sister	Didi/ bahini
Elder brother/ younger brother	Daai/bhaai
Daughter/son	Chhori/chhuraa