Do you want a challenge?

Could you live without the basics of flush toilets, electricity, hot water and modern plumbing, etc? Could you accept a culture that is very different from your own? Could you cope with being in a very unfamiliar place where you feel isolated? If you would be prepared to meet these challenges, then you could be opening the door to a personally enriching and life-changing experience by becoming involved in a unique and diverse range of activities in Nepal. For example, you could undertake voluntary work in dentistry by training and assisting qualified local people to undertake simple dental procedures, and also by teaching basic dental care in the local schools. There could also be a fantastic opportunity for you to provide back-up emergency dental care to some major expeditions that are happening over the next 12 months, including an Everest Summit Bid. There would also be the opportunity to take time out for an adventure trek in the spectacular regions of Everest, Annapurna and Langtang or challenge yourself further and climb a magnificent peak.

Although ‘Gap Year’ is normally associated with students who are taking a break from their studies, it can also apply to any one of any age who wants to take time out to broaden his or her outlook on life, by experiencing a different culture and by helping to improve education and the quality of community life.

You can bring much needed hands-on skills – teaching dentistry and dental hygiene, nursing, joinery, bricklaying, plastering, plumbing, agriculture, etc., or just the basic helping out of everyday chores, these all greatly benefit the local villages which have a very simple day – day way of life. It is also an opportunity to have an adventure of a lifetime, make new friends in all walks of life and a great chance to travel in this remarkable and much undiscovered part of the world. Nepal is regarded as one of the most under-developed countries in the world and ranked the 12 poorest on earth with 45 per cent of people living in dire poverty. This is due to is difficult geographical location, limited access to development aid, inadequate resources and investment and an overall lack of awareness and education amongst the people. So whether you are taking a ‘Gap Year’, taking a career break or just time out, the people of Nepal would appreciate your help to enable them to develop much needed community projects within their own areas. Of paramount importance to the success of these projects are employment skills, dental health education, primary health care, child welfare, economic wellbeing, social rights and the promotion of equality for women and children.

There are no fixed guidelines on how to volunteer. You can decide on your own aims and goals and on how best to achieve them. The choice is yours and there is no time limit. Trekking Encounters are the UK representatives for KEEP (Kathmandu Environment Education Project) and we work very closely with them in organising community projects. The school projects that are taking place at the moment includes the Community Development Programme and Volunteer Teaching in Government Schools. There is a programme packaged for people who choose to work as a volunteer for a longer period, three months to up to five months. During this programme, the volunteer stays with a family (Homestay) while engaging in activities directly from a known and veterinary.

Cultural Nepal
Kathmandu is both the capital and largest city of Nepal with a population of about 700,000. The three main historic cities are Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur. The Kathmandu valley has seven World Heritage Sites within a radius of 20km designated by UNESCO in 1979. Lumbini - Lord Buddha’s birthplace site, is the sacred birthplace of Siddhartha Gautama, the Shakya Prince, the eventual Shakayamuni and the ultimate Buddha - The Enlightened One. It is the holiest pilgrimage site for Buddhists.

Chitwan National Park: stretches across an area of 952 sq km and lies in the inner Terai belt of Chitwan. The park offers nature at its best with a jungle safari, a canoe on the river where you can see crocodiles and visit an elephant nursery.