

TWAM

Tools with a Mission

November 2025

Our News

Community growth in Zambia

Volunteer focus

A brighter future

Giving communities tools to build a future for themselves

Welcome to TWAM News


Dear Friends

Three years ago we told the story of Kelvin, an orphaned trainee bricklayer. Today, we are delighted to see the professional young man he has become who can build his own house. As shown on our front cover and on p5, his story is a testimony to the transforming power of tools.



Meanwhile, in the UK, our mission grows thanks to the hard work of volunteers such as Kath (p6) and our wonderful partner hubs in Medway and Chichester (p9), among others.

We hope you find this edition of our latest TWAM News both inspiring and informative. With every blessing for a peaceful Christmas and New Year.



John Noble

Chief Executive Officer

“I am He, I am He who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.” Isaiah 46:4



We were delighted to receive the Faith Award at the 2025 Suffolk Community Awards on 23rd September. This is a fantastic achievement that bears testament to our mission doing God's work providing practical aid. From left: Paul White, Grants & Corporate Fundraising Volunteer; Trevor Maynard, Head of Refurbishment; Tim Laczko, Fundraising & Communications Lead; and Brian Cutler, Refurbishment Volunteer.

Tools with a Mission

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About us

We are a Christian charity that collects donated usable tools, refurbishes them, sorts them into trade kits and sends them to the developing world for livelihood creation.

We support local people, meeting local needs with life-transforming skills training projects. We supply tools to equip training centres and to give to trainees when they graduate. With this support we see long-term sustainable livelihoods created.

Thanks to over 500 volunteers in the UK and your support, we will continue to transform lives and communities.



Time to donate?

We are always looking for more volunteers to help in our centres.

At present we particularly need volunteers in our refurbishment centres. Please visit twam.uk/volunteer to browse our available roles or call us on 01473 210220.



Tools to donate?

To find your nearest collection centre, or to contact a local collector, have a look at our website or call our Ipswich office.



Financial support

We keep our costs very low, but we still need a lot of support. We value all gifts, whether one-off or regular. You can donate online, send donations to our Ipswich postal address, or request a Standing Order and/or Gift Aid form.



Prayer support

TWAM depends on prayer. If you don't currently receive our quarterly prayer diary and would like to, please contact our Ipswich office.



Knitting machines!

Rob (right), John, and Lynette are refurbishment volunteers specialising in knitting machines. The team prepares the machines for dispatch, tests them, and selects the most suitable instruction manual or guide for the kits.

Machine knitting is an essential part of our shipments, with over 150 machines sent this year alone to Burundi, Zambia and Uganda. If you have an interest in machine knitting, we want to hear from you - call us today to give your time and skills!

TWAM is pleased to have partnered recently with the international Machine Knit Community; we will share more news on this soon.

Could you join us?

TWAM is a Christian charity that welcomes people of all faiths and none. If you would like to find out more, please get in touch on 01473 210220. More details can be found at twam.uk/volunteer.

Community growth in Zambia

In August, we visited our partners in rural Luapula to see how the inspiring power of tools can transform not just one, but many lives!

The TWAM Samfya District Development Team oversees and supports a network of skills groups, trainers, and local initiatives in the community. District Development Teams (DDTs) are TWAM's local volunteer teams. They're our people on the ground, meeting regularly to look at what's happening in their area and how TWAM's work can fit well, serve fairly, and make a lasting difference. The DDT identifies needs, connects trusted groups, and distributes the tools we send. Even remote areas benefit from this collaborative effort. During our visit, we met several tool recipients who had been positively impacted by the DDT's work.

New beginnings, new skills, new homes

Back in 2022, we met Kelvin (pictured opposite and on the front cover), an orphaned teenager who found hope in a bricklaying course. Three years later, at the DDT, he proudly shows us the house he is building with his own hands - a house for



himself and his family. His journey tells us the power of good-quality tools and the impact they can have on someone's life.

Other men are experiencing that power themselves. At 19, Emmanuel left school after Grade 7 with limited options beyond farm work for his parents. Eager for change, he joined a tailoring group supported by the DDT, training four days a week. What seemed simple at first quickly revealed itself as a challenging craft with lifelong benefits. "I thought tailoring would be easy," he told us, "but it's more than that. I'm learning something that will help me for the rest of my life." Meanwhile, fellow trainee Danny contributes by refurbishing generators and equipment, helping raise vital funds to support the DDT.

Richard (above right) learned carpentry from his father, and went on to open both a carpentry and a welding workshop. TWAM tools enabled him to boost both operations, now employing



of their work led to one delighted client commissioning the team to build his own home!

James - our International Programmes Manager - visited the Samfya DDT in July this year and saw first-hand the transformation that can be brought about by your support. He says:

“ During my recent trip, I was struck by how the District Development Teams, made up of local volunteers who truly understand their communities, are the driving force behind TWAM's impact on the ground. By working together and responding to real, local needs, they ensure our support reaches the people who need it most and delivers lasting change. ”

seven people in carpentry (including four trainees) and five in welding, and providing vital employment in his community. Together, his teams produce beds, doors, tables, roofing, and structural framing for houses. Evans (above left), one of Richard's team members, is gaining hands-on experience in both trades, strengthening the DDT's pool of skilled workers.

The Emmanuel Chibale House Project

One of the most impressive demonstrations of the DDT's power is a house built entirely by its trainees (including our old friend Kelvin), under the expert guidance of Emmanuel Chibale, Samfya DDT Coordinator. Using TWAM tools at every stage, students have learned the entire construction process - from laying the foundation to the final touches. Not only did the project provide vital income for the trainees and the DDT, but its prime location near a growing marketplace ensures future clients will witness the DDT's craftsmanship and seek their services. In fact, the quality

From the team in Zambia and from your friends here at TWAM in the UK, thank you!



Our Volunteers

TWAM has over 500 volunteers in the UK. The lifeblood of the charity, many work tirelessly behind the scenes. We are thrilled to celebrate their contribution.



Keith, one of our volunteer drivers

Kath (pictured opposite) works at our Rugby office where she is our van manager. She organises pick ups from volunteer collectors, coordinates volunteer drivers and ensures everything runs smoothly. She shares with us her experience of volunteering at TWAM.

How did you get started at TWAM?

To be honest, I had never heard of TWAM. Being retired, I had tried to volunteer with the local Food Bank and Christians Against Poverty, but to no avail. They didn't need anyone, or perhaps the Lord was closing doors! Someone suggested TWAM and my husband and I went along to the local depot in Rugby to find out more, and the rest, as they say, is history.

What are your main responsibilities?

I co-ordinate the Midlands van, which covers a vast area - in the north stretching from Wales and The Wirral across to the Humber in Lincolnshire, and in the south,

from Herefordshire and Gloucestershire to Oxfordshire, with the M4 creating a border. I receive emails and calls from regular collectors when they wish the van to call on them, as well as from individuals wanting to make one-off donations. We have a team of volunteer drivers - but always need more! - who make it possible for me to send the van out, usually four times a week.

What are your main challenges?

As our drivers are all volunteers, they are not always available, so often collections must be rearranged. To make running the van economical, I need to coordinate collections so that the van will return to the depot at least two-thirds full. When I receive a request for a collection that I know will only take up a quarter of the van, I contact other local collectors to see if they have anything for us to collect. Obviously, distance needs to be taken into account.

What's most rewarding about your role?

Knowing I have played my small part in assisting in the whole process of getting old, surplus tools from sheds and garages to their final destination where they will make a huge difference to the lives of those receiving them. To us in the UK, who take so much for granted, we can hardly begin to imagine the difference receiving one sewing machine can make.

Why do you do what you do for TWAM?

I could say "because I can" but that would not be totally true. I believe the Lord closed the door to my other volunteer attempts and opened the door to join the TWAM family. I know what I do can have an enormous impact on the lives of the those TWAM helps.

I expect you have plenty of anecdotes!

Indeed! For example, there are times when our collectors' addresses can be difficult to find, especially when it's the first time a driver has been there, even though they go out with the full address and postcode. On one occasion, sat nav told our driver "turn left and you have reached your destination". The driver did as instructed and found himself in a hospital car park! He rang the collector who told him to drive round the back to a gate, then up the track to his house. He was in the right place after all!



How many people does it take to make a van work?

No, that's not the first line of a bad joke!

TWAM would simply not be able to operate if we did not have a team to enable our van collections. Every time the van goes out, all these people - all of whom are volunteers - play their part.

Donors

These generous people donate unused or unwanted tools for us to package into toolkits and send to Africa. But they need to get them to us, which means they need a...

Tool Collector

Using their own facilities and often driving long distances, tool collectors take the tools from donors and store them until our van can pick them up. When their storage facilities are getting full they phone the...

Van Manager

Kath (and others in different locations) arrange for the van to visit our Tool Collectors and schedule the trip with our...

Drivers

Who sit tirelessly in traffic jams, deal with flat tyres and stay patient in the face of motorway madness and misleading sat nav instructions. Often, they need to do some heavy lifting, and on hand to help are our...

Drivers' Mates

Vital, but often unsung heroes who help to get the most unwieldy items on to our van and make sure everything is packed safely.

A huge thank you to all these volunteers. Without you, there would be no TWAM!

Our impact in the UK

Our dedicated hubs play a vital role in TWAM's mission. We shine a spotlight on two UK-based groups.



Chichester

There is a flourishing TWAM local group in the heart of Chichester. With an average age of mid-70, the dedicated volunteers collect tools from the public, sort them, and refurbish as many as they can. These are then transported to TWAM Ipswich, ready to be sent overseas. Incredibly, on average, 1.25 tonnes of tools are moved in every collection - giving new life to things that might otherwise go to landfill. A recognised part of the local community, Chichester recently celebrated the commitment of one of its founders and volunteers, Peter Watkins, who has been contributing to TWAM for over 30 years.

Medway

Located in the heart of sunny Kent, the Medway Volunteer Workshop in Chatham has been open since 2019. Entirely self-funded, it partners with TWAM to increase refurbishment capacity, supplying us with lovingly prepared toolkits. For example, last year, 19% of all sewing machines sent to Africa from Ipswich came via Medway!

Medway also provides a vital resource in its local area. It is the base of one of TWAM's vans, and gives more than 33 volunteers an opportunity to spend time with like-minded people. One such volunteer is Will (pictured above) whose previous career was in aeronautical engineering. He now refurbishes tools for Medway's toolkits, such as planes and garden forks. "After retiring", he tells us, "one can miss that sense of community, of belonging. Coming here gives me something to do and to look forward to."

We love to work with organisations that have a similar ethos to TWAM, recognising, supporting, and strengthening them. Charity begins at home, goes the saying - and this is true of both the Chichester and Medway hubs. They were started by a group of dedicated people, initially working from home, who were willing to drive a local dynamic forward. Over time, these hubs have played an ever more important role in allowing us to meet our goals and we are extremely grateful to them for their work and partnership!

Every one is a star!



It can, at times, be hard to take in the scale, breadth and impact of TWAM, so we've put together some facts and figures that illustrate just how many volunteers are involved in our operation. No matter what their role, every single person plays a part.

15

Managers and partner representatives across the African countries in which we work



25

District Development Teams, each of which consists of between four and 10 people

526

Amazing volunteers here in the UK

549

Groups we helped across Africa in 2024

We have received many stories of long-serving volunteers - more than we have room to include here! We plan to continue to celebrate our volunteers in future issues, so if you are a long server, please get in touch.

...amongst our longest serving volunteers are:

40+ years

Beryl & Bill Dewhurst
Peter Gray
John Lapish

30+ years

Bryan Orchard
Peter Watkins

20-25 years

Mike Astbury
Mike & Liz Dunk
Peter & Ann Fisher
Hamid & Jenny Gordan
Terry Heath
Sue & Mervyn McKinney
John Mills
Sue Moloney
David Moseley
Brian Smith
Terry Smith
John & Linda White

15-19 years

Keith & Judith Bailey
John Butt
Mary Carter
Brian Cutler
Graham & Marilyn Hall
Reina Jackson
Judith Jones
Andrew Kelland
John Mathieson
Tony Middleton
Quentin Phillips
Ian Schoolar
Alan Smith
Tony Titcumb

If you would like to find out about volunteering opportunities at TWAM, please see our website: twam.uk or call our Volunteer Coordinator, Jess, on 01473 210220.



A skill for a brighter future



Christine - a tutor at St Luke's Training Centre

At St Luke's Training Centre in Kitwe, Zambia, a brighter future is unfolding.

Women who once faced uncertain futures are learning the powerful, life-changing skill of tailoring. For just 150 kwacha a month – around £8 – they receive six months of hands-on training, led by experienced mentors like Christine Mulenga.

“I learnt tailoring in the 1980s,” Christine says. “Now, I’m training my fourth intake of students. Over 50 women have already graduated through this centre and many are running their own businesses.” For many, this opportunity is a lifeline. Students come from all corners of Kitwe,

some walking miles every day, driven by determination and hope.

Angela Tawila (pictured opposite top) is one such student and travels 16km daily on foot to get to the centre. “Tailoring is a great skill that helps you to survive,” she says. “I had no experience before, but I’m trying hard because I want to become a designer. My dream is to have an international business one day and travel the world with my work.”

Angela’s dream is one step closer to realisation because of the power of TWAM tools. For these women, a sewing machine is not just a tool - it’s freedom. It’s a source of income, dignity and possibility. Christine’s own machine, bought for a bargain four years ago, is still going strong. Imagine what one sewing machine could mean to someone starting out today.

You can be part of this transformation. For the cost of a sewing machine kit – just £25 – you can help a woman in Kitwe stitch her way to a brighter future. Donate today. Empower a dream. Weave a new beginning. Thank you!



Gift inspiration

Finding original and innovative Christmas presents seems to get harder every year. With the exception of children – who always have a list for Santa – how often do your family and friends say: “There’s nothing I want”, or “Don’t buy me anything expensive”.

We have the answer to your Christmas present dilemma. An alternative gift from TWAM will not be discarded by Boxing Day. It will make a long-lasting impact and could even change a life. That’s not something you can say about a pair of socks! Please take a look at our Alternative Gifts catalogue, enclosed with this TWAM News.

Burundi Update

You may remember that in the May issue of TWAM News we reported that our very first container had left Ipswich to go to Burundi – one of the world’s poorest countries.

We are delighted to report that it arrived safely in Karusi province in September, and at time of writing is being unpacked. Nicknamed ‘Container Glyn’ in memory of a long-serving member of the TWAM family, it carries 463 toolkits for use by our partners at the Herridge Technical School, and many others.



James Noble, our International Programmes Manager, writes: “After a long journey, our very first container to Burundi has safely arrived! Thanks to the tireless efforts of Rachel (Country Coordinator) and Georgette (Country Partner), our work in Burundi can now truly begin, and we’re excited to see how it grows and develops.”



Just one toolkit can have positive repercussions for a whole community. People like Christine, featured on page 10 of this edition, share their skills to help create many livelihoods. Please continue to support us to ensure that every suitable tool is used to transform lives in Africa.

Please accept my gift of:

£15 £25 £50 £100 £150 £250 Other: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

ONLINE

You can donate online at twam.uk/donate or using the account details below including your surname and postcode as a reference.

Barclays Bank Account No: 33190994 | **Sort Code:** 20-44-51

CARD

You can donate by credit or debit card by ringing our head office on 01473 210220. We're open Monday to Friday, 9am-3pm.

Would you like to receive our monthly **Supporter E-News**? It's packed with up to date news and inspiring stories. If so, you can either write your email address below, or go to **twam.uk/stayintouch** to sign up online.

My email address is: _____

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

I want to Gift Aid my donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to Tools with a Mission. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please notify the charity if you want to cancel this declaration, change your name or home address, or no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains. If you pay Income Tax at the higher rate or additional rate and want to receive additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your self-assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

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