

The Anvil

Your monthly update from Tools For Self Reliance Cymru

February has been a very eventful month. The teams have been out to the fields and halls this month meeting friends, selling gardening tools and generally enjoying the early spring excitement. We were at (in no particular order) **Abergavenny Seedy Sunday, The Monmouth Seed Swap, The Leominster Seed Swap and the Hereford Seed Swap**. All of the events were very successful for us and predictably, we sold a lot of gardening tools. Our teams involved some long term volunteers and a few new faces and it's a wonderfully social thing to do. If you ever wondered what it might be like (it's fun) then get in touch, we can always find a way to let you volunteer at events, in the workshop, selling tools in our little shop, helping with the eBay shop or even helping pack the container if you're fit. You'll meet a lot of interesting, dedicated people who love the tools as much as they love our mission.

In Tanzania things are really starting to move ahead. After many years with our old Partner SIDO in Mwanza, Said, John, Viviana, Lucas (our sewing machine fundi) and Michael have, on March 1, reported for work with our new partner at the new facilities in Kalwande Vocational Training Centre. The first day was busy with meeting the local administrators, settling in to the new space, and coming to grips with the idea of shifting the tons of tools out to the craftspeople and artists who need them so badly. There's still plenty of work to be done on the new workshop and some of the tools they need are still either in Mwanza or here in container 19 but at least now we have a team on site and we are definitely moving forward. Our work has been hindered by the logistics of working so remotely and many requests for tools are outstanding so it's fantastic that the team are back together once again and geared up, ready to go. Many thanks to the trustees, and to co-chair Corin Mills, for the very hard work of dealing with all the different government bodies, the local groups, the staff and the movement of tools and equipment required to get to this point. We hope the team find the new situation rewarding.

Over in Tanga the business training course for the Keep Them Tanga Singers Singing project completed. This was an add on to the supply of machines to the group and the training they had in maintaining and repairing the sewing machines. This sort of ad-hoc collective of tailors wanted to become more formalized and open a proper workspace. They currently work mostly from home and meet occasionally but as business was picking up, they felt some additional training in business practices was required to support the team and prepare them for taking a step forward as a 'real business'. We arranged and funded this training through SIDO and as you can see everyone was completely engaged and all have graduated now. It'll be interesting to watch this group expand in the future.



Container 19 is starting to fill up. We've been lucky to have received a large number of tools so far this year. Very large donations from as far away as Anglesey have been sorted, packed and stored away. We always need more tools, even with this being our nineteenth container we are barely scratching the surface of the need. If you have tools, any kind of tools, that you no longer need please remember us. Some of the big donations have come from people who have had a bit of space in a shed or garage and have let friends and neighbours know about us. They collect the tools until the space is full and then either bring them to us or ask us to arrange pickup. If you have this kind of space available and think you can help this way we'd be more than happy to help you organize it.

Some of the large collections have come from John Reece Gardening, The Cardiff River Trust, Gareth Phillips (all the way from Anglesea), Paul Verney (all the way from Stroud) and well, too many to mention but we thank everyone who has helped us. We are always in need of sewing machines, carpentry tools, mechanic's tools, leather working tools and of course the gardening tools that help fund our work. If your garden tools need a refresh, bring the old ones to us and head home with a beautifully restored replacement tool from our shop.

More Locally

March will see us at the **Carmarthen Seedy Saturday on 04/03/2023** so come on out and meet Colin Hill and Phil Pope for a chat and a look at our fair trade tools and vintage garden tools.

Although **March** looks quiet on the events calendar with just one event booked, **April** will see us at the [Cart Shed Plant Fair](#) and [Spring Greens](#) and after that the festivals all start up so we'll be very busy this summer. Please drop by our stall and say hello and of course see the tools we have to offer. As always, if you wish to support our work but can't get to us at events or to our shop you can donate to us directly through this [link](#).

Paypal provides this service without commission, you don't need an account and you can use any card and even make your donation a recurring one.

Thank you, and as we say in Wales and Tanzania:
Diolch yn fawr / Asante Sana