

# TOOLS

For Self Reliance

# CYMRU

## Trustee Information Pack 2024



# Message from our Co-Chairs

**Thank you for showing an interest in becoming a potential Trustee at Tools for Self Reliance Cymru. This pack aims to provide you with all the information you need to decide if you wish to join us.**

**We are a successful and very long-lived charity – testament to our many committed volunteers and supporters. We were founded in 1986 and we are based in Crickhowell, Powys.**

**Our aims have never changed from the outset – the reduction of poverty in rural sub-Saharan Africa, in particular, around the southern shores of Lake Victoria in Tanzania where we concentrate our efforts.**

**We do this by shipping donated tools and sewing machines there and providing free training in their use and maintenance. We also provide an element of business skill training.**

**We are very proud of what we have achieved over almost 40 years. We are a very friendly small-scale organisation doing important work that changes lives. We very much hope that you will want to join the team.**





# A Short Message from a new(ish) Trustee

They are all mad, run now. Seriously though I have been a Trustee for almost 2 years and I am very proud to be involved with this organisation and it's diverse group of Trustees and volunteers. To their great credit some of the people involved have been doing this work for decades. Some, well past their prime, are still camping in fields at festivals to raise money for the cause. They are a unique, occasionally eccentric bunch all with big hearts. Since joining I have learnt basic blacksmithing and some green woodworking at festivals and as a Trustee, how our charity is run and the challenges it faces. I have learnt a lot and continue to do so and I have made many new friends young and old. I find it very rewarding and it has given my life a genuine new purpose.

Last summer I caught sight of my reflection in a shop window at Crickhowell on my way to our shop there, I was carrying an old fashioned scythe and one of our stick stools with hazel legs that we make at festivals. It made me smile, what a great way to be spending a day.

I can say also that you will be made very welcome, helping a wonderful charity. And who knows? One day you may find yourself walking up a hill with a scythe, a stool and a smile.



# What is a Trustee ?

Simply put, trustees are the people who share ultimate responsibility for governing a charity and directing how it is managed and run - to achieve its aims and objectives.

Trustees must act in the charity's best interests, deal with conflicts of interest, manage the charity's resources responsibly, implement appropriate financial controls, manage risks, act with reasonable care and skill and take appropriate advice when needed.

All this is not nearly as daunting as it sounds, new trustees will be assigned a mentor and have an induction process. We want the work to be enjoyable as well as effective.

Trustees are unpaid as are all our volunteers.

## What skills are we looking for ?

Alongside commitment, dedication and good inter-personal skills we are ideally looking for people with skills in the following areas :

- social media / digital
- finance
- overseas development
- event management
- fund raising / grant application
- marketing
- e-commerce





# What sort of things will I be doing?

This will depend on your skill set and your interests and also what projects and issues may be a priority at any given time. Typical activities include:

- Having some fun, making some great new friends and learning some new skills.
- Researching and applying for grant funding.
- Helping organise marketing campaigns on our social media.
- Keeping our social media up to date and engaging.
- Helping to organise events and festivals.
- Bookkeeping / financial / annual returns.
- Attending events and festivals.
- Networking in your area.
- Helping plan the logistics and work and spend in Tanzania.
- Helping to ensure our facilities at Crickhowell are fit for purpose.
- Helping to ensure our volunteers are looked after and dealing with any issues raised.
- Ensuring we have the right equipment for our activities.
- Marketing and promotion.
- Helping grow sales via e-commerce, at our shop at at events.
- Ensuring our volunteers have a safe space in which to operate.
- Promoting diversity and inclusivity and a friendly, welcoming volunteer experience.
- Ensuring we follow our Articles Of Association.

This is not an exhaustive list but just meant to show some of types of work we undertake as a Board of Trustees. Also note that these activities are spread across the Board and they have peaks and troughs, for example during the Autumn and Winter there are very few events that we attend and no festivals, so that area of activity is very quiet at that time.

# What to expect from us

**A friendly welcome and a rewarding experience. That we will provide induction, support and training as required. That you will have the opportunity to make new friends, learn new skills, gain new knowledge and attend events and festivals. A chance to do some good in the world in a unique organisation. Flexibility for you to engage in any related areas that interest you. That you will have some fun along the way. Plenty of tea.**

# What we expect from you

**A commitment to the charity that entails giving some of your time and effort. To always promote the charity's best interest. To treat everyone else in the organisation in a respectful manner. To get involved.**





# Our Trustee Board Structure

There are five Directors on the Board of Trustees with vacancies for four more. One person currently doubles as Secretary and Treasurer. We are deliberately loosely structured and try to be as flexible as we can. If somebody has a special interest, skill or talent such as Marketing and PR then it is to everyone's interest to let that person lead in that area. That would be our approach with any new Trustees. Additionally if somebody needs support or training in a particular then we will provide it alongside any induction process.





# What we do

The charity collects donations of unwanted tools, machinery and sewing machines from a very large area surrounding our base in Crickhowell, Powys. Around thirty tonnes are shipped every year to our workshop in Tanzania, refurbished by our skilled staff and distributed to micro businesses at affordable rates. We also provide free training in their use and maintenance alongside business skills training.

We help some of the most disadvantaged groups of women, girls and disabled. We equip and train the people we work with, enabling them to become self-reliant so they can earn a wage and look after themselves and their families.

# How we do it

Some of the donations are not essential in Africa, such as gardening, green woodworking and specialist trade tools. These are refurbished by volunteers at our own workshop in Crickhowell. These are sold in our shop, online, and at a variety of festivals and community events we attend throughout the year. This provides a key regular source of income needed for such things as shipping costs. Assistance by grants from the Welsh Government and many philanthropic trusts has been very welcome to fund specific special projects, such as the training in Tanzania. None of this is possible without the goodwill of the public who donate to us and our wonderful gang of volunteers.



# Tools to Tanzania

Selected items are packed by volunteers at our Crickhowell depot into a 20ft shipping container and sent to our workshop at the campus of our Partner, Kalwande Vocational College, near Mwanza, Tanzania. Our four skilled staff refurbish the tools, equipment and sewing machines and our Project Officer organises the distribution of kits to the artisan groups we support. The empty shipping containers are sold to bolster the local funds of the Project and College.

## Training in Tanzania

We have learnt through long experience that it is not enough just to send hardware to allow artisans to earn a living and support their families.

Training in their use and maintenance along with business and life skills is just as important. Together with the college teachers and administrators, we have developed short training courses that are proving to be extremely worthwhile. That training though, is expected to be supplied free of charge to the potential artisans. Effective teachers have to be employed. Food, accommodation, and training materials have to be paid for. Meeting these financial challenges is a key problem for us.





# Events and Festivals

We are a well known and very popular presence at many festivals and community events. This includes Glastonbury and Green Man. We attend these to raise funds by selling tools and at festivals we also run blacksmithing and green wood-working (stool making) workshops. They provide an opportunity to showcase our charity and to network with like-minded groups and individuals. We help to foster an interest in traditional crafts and tools.





# Why we do it

Our charity ticks many boxes, at it's core is the ambition to help reduce poverty in one of the worlds most challenged areas. This in a sustainable manner, helping as many dis-advantaged people as we can. Happily we can do this by rescuing often unloved tools and sewing machines, keeping them from the landfill and using them to transform lives. We also pride ourselves in ensuring our volunteers work in a non-judgemental space. We have volunteers of all abilities, some who attend with carers. Our volunteers learn new skills and make new friends.

Please read Rehema's story below, she left school at the age of fifteen. She wrote in Swahili and it was translated by our Project Officer.

We think it is a great testimony of the benefit the charity brings to her and many of her countrymen and women.



## Rehema's Story

*My name is Rehema Peter, a resident from Kigongo village neighbouring Kalwande College. I am 20 years old and a form four leaver. I got information about sewing machines repair from my local government leader. He said he was requested by a certain Project Officer to identify potential trainees. I was very happy to hear that as I am a tailor but not very skilled one. I enjoyed the training and honestly I did not know that a seeing machine has so many small parts! Thanks for our teacher who was able to instruct us slowly step by step*

*One other interesting thing about this training was a big number of girls compared to boys. Normally such kind of training involves more men than women since women are expected do just sewing. But as you witnessed female trainees were even more active than men. Three members of my family are tailors and they are really looking forward to have their machines fixed by me when they have any technical problem. I also noted that most of us did not know the importance of cleaning and oiling the machines. Now I will let them know and also teach them how to do it.*

*It was a great surprise to me when on the graduation day were provided with a gift of sewing machine. I never expected that and even my parents were astonished when they saw me coming back home with a certificate and a machine! Just to add on what our leader said that day, let me also ask you to send my sincere thanksgivings and appreciation to TFSR wherever they are. Getting a two weeks training and a strong sewing machine both free of charge is not a small thing. I am very grateful*

*Please don't leave us alone, keep in touch with us, as your children, until we manage to support ourselves.*

# Additional Information

You can find out more about our work at:



[www.tfsrcymru.org.uk](http://www.tfsrcymru.org.uk)



[www.facebook.com/tfsrcymru](https://www.facebook.com/tfsrcymru)



[www.x.com/tfsrcymru](https://www.x.com/tfsrcymru)



[www.instagram.com/tools2tanzania](https://www.instagram.com/tools2tanzania)

If you would like to have an initial informal discussion with a Trustee, or to arrange a visit prior to submitting your application, please contact us via the email [\*chair@tfsrcymru.org.uk\*](mailto:chair@tfsrcymru.org.uk)

Whilst we are Crickhowell based we welcome applicants from outside of the local area and we do pay travelling expenses. It is also possible to undertake most of the work from home and to attend meetings via zoom.

Our workshop and shop address is shown below - pop in and have a look, opening hours are on the website.

**TFSR Cymru Tools Workshop**  
**Upper House Farm.**  
**Standard Street, Crickhowell.**  
**Powys. NP8 1BZ**

**Charity Commission ref : 1055483**  
**Companies House ref : 3068269**