



A message from the Chief Executive

Dear Friends

You do not need me to tell you that we are living through completely unprecedented days. I'm sure if someone had told us six months ago what would be happening today we would not have believed them. At TWAM we have spent many hours planning our response to the huge threat this is to our day to day operation. I would therefore like to outline the main challenges we face, and what we are doing to keep the tools going out to some of the world's most vulnerable people.

Impact on Tool Collection

*We rely on a dedicated **Volunteer Collector** team to respond to requests for tool donations. The majority are over 70 and understandably many have taken the decision to cease collecting for the time being. We are regularly updating our database and website to ensure we do not pass on details of collectors who have stood down. This will mean collections will significantly reduce and many requests for collections will not be met. If people ring or email and cannot be put in touch with a collector we will make a note of their details and put them in touch once the worst of the crisis has passed. If a collector is still working we have put measures in place to restrict one-to-one contact, and they will explain these to the donor.*

*We have four **TWAM vans** across the country, who also rely entirely on volunteer drivers. Once again many are over 70 and have had to stand down, and as a result all our van teams are significantly depleted. We will do our best to honour all collector and Refurbishment Centre collections, but this will take longer than normal. Collections from the public will not be possible by TWAM Van (but still by volunteer collector) as we prioritise our collection team.*

Impact on Tool Refurbishment

*Once again most of our **Refurbishment Centres** rely entirely on volunteers and with the combination of advice to over 70s and social distancing we have seen a huge drop in volunteers. Some centres have been forced to close and others reduce to opening only by prior arrangement to accept tool donations. Only Ipswich remains fully open, but with hugely reduced capacity.*

Impact on tool kits to Africa

Short term we aim to reduce the number of containers we send to Africa by half to one a month. However, long term due to the drop in tools received and over 80% of volunteers absent, even this will become unsustainable. If the crisis continues into late summer it may mean we have to temporarily close.

Impact on income

We rely entirely on the generosity of our supporters and our costs will not reduce because we are struggling to collect, refurbish and ship tools. Therefore, it is a grave concern that our income could be significantly impacted by this crisis. We currently rely heavily on postal donations and therefore I have no choice but to ask you to consider giving online or by phone if you do not wish to leave home to post a letter.

*You can give online via our website, internet banking (Barclays Bank, account: 33190994, Sort code: 20-44-51) or by Credit/Debit Card by ringing the office (01473 210220). **I understand that at times like this, our minds and prayers are on other things, but please do not forget us in this time of great need.***

Thank you for reading my letter and for your support and prayers for TWAM. We need them both. Personally, I am clinging to the promise of Psalm 46 where we read:

Psalm 46:1

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

This promise was given when all seemed lost as Israel was being overwhelmed by a far superior foreign army and their cities were falling one by one to the onslaught. Everywhere people were panicking and within the chaos losing sight of their God. The Psalmist brought their eyes and hearts back to God with the wonderful truth that all is never lost with him. And miraculously he did save them. As we appear to be going through a similar experience at the hands of a virus, I take comfort from knowing that God is looking after TWAM and each of us, even when, in all honesty it's sometimes hard to see.

So, please be assured of our prayers for you, as together we strive to live through these incredibly challenging days.

Yours faithfully



*Mike Griffin
Chief Executive*

Empowering people with the tools that create livelihoods and transform lives

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