Local tool charity seeks support after van destroyed by thieves

Thursday 2 February, 2023

The charity Tools with a Mission (TWAM) is looking for support from local companies after thieves destroyed their van outside their Rugby refurbishment centre in a devastating blow to their work. The van takes daily trips to collect donated tools from across the country, which are refurbished and sent to Africa. They are seeking support in the form of a new van or financial assistance towards one, and a secure place to park it as their yard is no longer safe.

Staff pulled into the yard on Wednesday morning to see that the van's front end was completely missing. The previous night, thieves had removed the entire engine, the gearbox, the bonnet, and the driver's seat. The van is completely unusable and will likely be written off

This van is an essential part of the charity's work. It was purchased only one year ago, thanks to a grant. Tools that are donated by members of the public and collected by the charity's network of volunteers are picked up by the van and brought back to their refurbishment centres. Without this van, tools have no way of getting to the centres where they will be refurbished and sent off to skills training centres in Africa.

Mike Griffin, CEO, said: "With the cost of living crisis hitting our income hard and expenses going through the roof, this is heartbreaking, and we desperately need some local support."

Frieda from Zambia had her life transformed by her sewing machine. She simply couldn't afford to feed her eight children, nor send them to school. Since she received a machine and became a tailor, her family have been able to eat every single day and finally begin their education. This is the true impact of TWAM tools; without this van, thousands of people will be unable to break free from their lives of poverty and suffering.

Ian, deputy volunteer manager at the Rugby centre, said: "I am absolutely gutted. How could someone do this to a charity?" Other volunteers at the centre are outraged by this act of theft and destruction.

Local police told the charity that they can never keep a van in their yard again, as it will most likely continue to be targeted. This poses a significant issue for the charity, as they have nowhere else to keep their van overnight or at weekends.

The charity is asking local organisations and businesses to consider offering a secure space for them to keep their van once they have managed to acquire a new one. They are also asking businesses and local philanthropists to consider supporting the charity by replacing the van or potentially offering financial assistance towards purchasing a new one.

About Tools with a Mission

TWAM has been sending refurbished donated tools to Africa and keeping them out of UK landfills since 1984. The tools are packed into trade kits and sent to local organisations that teach vulnerable members of society valuable skills such as carpentry, tailoring, and mechanics. These skills give them the power to generate their own income and start their own careers, ending the cycle of poverty and maintaining their independence.

For more information or to arrange interviews, please contact James Noble, Fundraising and Communications Officer, on 07738494005 or email jamesn@twam.uk.

For more information about the charity and what they do, visit their website www.twam.uk, or our Facebook and Instagram (@toolswithamission).

Media:





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