

renew169

A quiet shared space in Towcester
where it's OK not to be OK

Renewsletter - Spring 2025

Farewell to Laura



Back in 2018, when Ruth Rice had just launched the Renew Wellbeing Centres Network, the pastor at the Tove Valley Baptist Fellowship, the reverend Paul Knight, felt that the TVBF together with Churches Together in Towcester could create a safe space in the town where it is OK not to be OK. He tasked Laura Patterson with carrying this venture forward and it is largely thanks to her vision and hard work that the Renew169 Wellbeing Café was established. Since October 2018, when we opened, Laura has been involved at some level and the success of the venture has in no small

measure been down to her. It was therefore with some sadness and huge gratitude that we said farewell to Laura in February, as she stepped down as Chair of Trustees. Renew169 has a great team of people behind it and Laura has been a great team leader, as well as a great advocate of the charity over the years. We wish her all the best for the future and thank her for her commitment and dedication in making Renew 169 what it is today.

As a parting gesture, Laura is planning to do a sponsored walk in order to raise much needed funds for us. She will be walking the 100 miles of the South Downs Way over nine days, from 24th May to 1st June and is hoping to raise a minimum of £500. If you would like to sponsor her, simply scan the QR code below.

**Laura Patterson's
JustGiving Page**





Started back in September 2022, the Towcester Repair Café is now a regular fixture on the fourth Saturday of each month, from 10am to 12pm at the Renew 169 Wellbeing Café on Watling Street.

2024 was a very busy year for the Repair Café, which saw 63 volunteers giving 126 hours of their time to repair 150 items for 99 customers and raise £1000 from donations towards the running of Renew169.

The team can turn their hands to just about anything and can repair small electrical / kitchen appliances, radios, CD and DVD players, vacuum cleaners, toys, clocks, sewing and clothes repairs, woodworking and furniture and bicycles in the warmer months.

The Repair Café concept started in Amsterdam back in 2009, with the simple idea that we should not be throwing things away that could be repaired to prolong their life. But it is difficult nowadays to find places that can carry out repairs and often it is more expensive to fix things than it would be to buy a new item. That's where the Repair Café comes in, bringing together volunteers from the local community, who can share their technical and crafting skills to breathe new life into damaged and faulty household appliances, clothes and furniture.

There are now over 2500 Repair Cafés worldwide. Besides the Netherlands, there are Repair Cafés in Belgium, Germany, France, here in the United Kingdom, the United States and in dozens of other countries around the world. Repair Café has even made its way to India and Japan.

Repair Cafés work on many levels that are particularly relevant today – they extend the life of products that would otherwise be thrown away and save the owners the cost of replacement. There is no charge for us to look at faulty items and the team will assess and fault-find to determine if it is repairable. If it is, then we only ask for the owner to cover the cost of any spare parts, if needed. All the labour is free and provided by the volunteers, though many customers leave us a donation that helps towards the running costs.

So, if you have any broken or faulty items you would like us to look at, please come along to one of our regular repair sessions that we have coming up on 26th April, 24th May and 28th June.

If you would like to volunteer and become a repairer, we are always looking for people with the skills and know-how to support the Repair Café. Come along, check out the Renew169 Facebook page or drop us an email at Trustee@renew169.org.uk.

Calling all crafters, makers and artists!

We are excited to announce a new initiative. On the third Wednesday of every month, we are hosting crafting evenings at the café, from 7-9pm. Anyone can come along to meet and socialise with others, whilst participating in craft activities they have brought along. Complete projects you have started at home or try something new! There is no charge for these sessions and tea & coffee are available to purchase.



Our first 'Creative Night' took place on Wednesday 19th March and we were delighted to welcome about a dozen crafters, who brought with them a diverse and interesting

selection of crafts. Future sessions will take place on 16th April, 21st May and 18th June, so if you enjoy crafting please come along and meet like-minded people for an evening of fun!



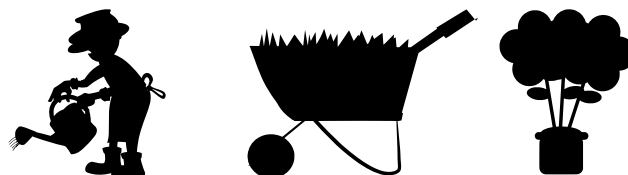
Easter Afternoon Teas

We had a great time at our Easter themed fund-raising afternoon teas at the Café on Saturday 12th April. We would like to say a big thank you to everyone who contributed in any way, as well as to all those who came along and supported the even, for making it such a success. As well as being a lot of fun, we raised £495.00 for the ongoing work of Renew169. Here is a selection of photographs from all three sittings.



Community Garden

We are in the process of establishing a Community Garden in Towcester. Look out for more news in the coming weeks. In the meantime, if you enjoy gardening and could spare a couple of hours to volunteer on a Tuesday or Thursday morning to work in the garden, please contact us!



Are you competitive? Could you walk, run, cycle or trek for us? Getting involved in an activity to support your local charity is hugely rewarding and helps you get fit at the same time.



Our next challenge is fast approaching – we have teamed up with Towcester Mill Brewery and we invite any cyclists who would like to ride in the Towcester Mill Brewery Sportive on 24th May 2025 to ride for us and raise money through sponsorship. It will be a fantastic day of cycling – starting and finishing at the Mill Brewery and taking riders through the beautiful Northamptonshire countryside over either a 38- or 60-mile route. For information on how to take part please email Manager@renew169.org.uk.

Regular Weekly Activities

Our drop-in service is open Monday - Thursday, 10am-3pm.
No booking necessary, just come as you are!

In addition, we offer the following sessions each week:

Tuesdays

- Lunch Club (soup & toasted sandwiches), 12pm.
- Join us on a Tuesday afternoon from 1pm for our weekly craft activity.

Wednesdays

- Knit & Natter: A group meets at the back of the café each Wednesday from 10.30am – 12pm to knit and chat together.
- Soup and a Stroll: Meet at the café at 12pm. Walk to the Water Meadows and complete one or two circuits, then return to the café for soup and a roll after your stroll.

Thursdays

- Sandwich Club, 12pm.

Fridays

- Grief, Comfort & Coffee, from 10 - 11.30am.

Registered Charity No. 1196631

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Grief, Comfort & Coffee

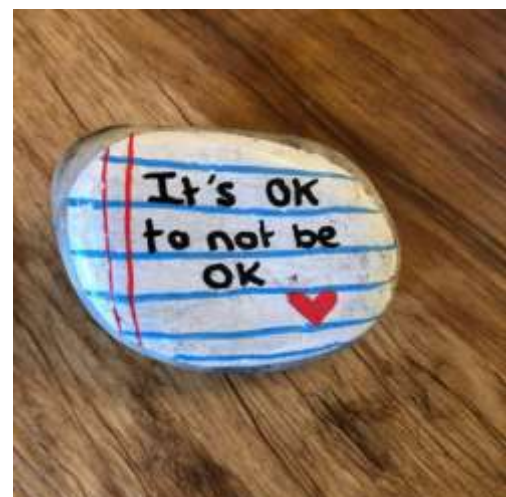
Free wellbeing support
for any type of grief or loss

EVERY FRIDAY 10-11.30AM DURING TERM TIME AT
RENEW169, 169 WATLING STREET,
TOWCESTER NN12 6BX

DROP IN AND CHAT WITH THE TEAM FROM RENEW169 AND
GAYTON LODGE COUNSELLING

CONNECT WITH OTHERS EXPERIENCING GRIEF AND LOSS

FOR MORE INFORMATION EMAIL
MANAGER@RENEW169.ORG.UK



Contact us:

Email: manager@renew169.org.uk

169 Watling Street

Towcester

07761 041203 (Monday to Friday, between 9am and 3pm)

Website: www.renew169.org.uk

Registered Charity no. 1196631

