

# renew169

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

## Renewsletter - Summer 2026

The late summer months have proved to be a challenging time for all of us at renew169, but we have faced difficult times before and we were not to be defeated! Unfortunately, we have been experiencing environmental and maintenance issues with our current premises at 169 Watling Street in Towcester, which forced us to close for a few days in early August. Thankfully, we were quickly able to secure the use of temporary premises at the Chantry House and the Sawpits Centre and have been on tour this summer with a series of pop-up wellbeing cafés around town, manned by our usual staff and volunteers. These new arrangements will continue until we are able to obtain new permanent premises, so please make sure you keep up to date by regularly checking our website ([renew169.org.uk](https://renew169.org.uk)) or Facebook page ([renew169 Wellbeing Café](https://www.facebook.com/renew169)), where we will communicate any updates or information as and when things change.

For the time being our drop-in service continues as usual, on Mondays to Thursdays, from 10am to 3pm, at our new locations as follows:

### *Mondays & Wednesdays*

The Meeting Room at The Sawpits Centre, Towbury Lane, Towcester, NN12 6EX, situated just off Richmond Road.



### *Tuesdays & Thursdays*

The Chantry House, 88 Watling Street East, Towcester NN12 6BT, situated between the Post Office and the Town Hall.



## Community Garden News

It is just over a year since the Tove Valley Centre very kindly gave renew169 the use of their allotments to create a Community Garden in Towcester: a place for people to come together; make new friends; learn new skills and enjoy gentle exercise and fresh air by doing some gardening. The Community Garden first opened at The Tove Valley Centre, which is located on Northampton Road in Towcester, on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2025 and the transformation since then has been remarkable. There is a small but dedicated team of volunteers, who tend the garden regularly, which is absolutely thriving despite the extremely challenging conditions they have faced during this long, hot and very dry summer. They grow flowers as well as fruit & vegetables, which are either sold or used in the café to make snacks and lunches.



It has become a veritable haven for wildlife too. The garden is a busy beehive of insect activity and the flower beds are teeming with life. A young roe deer was even spotted hiding amongst the fruit bushes recently.



On Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June we held our very first Community Garden Open Day and we were thrilled that Towcester town mayor, Cllr Magie

Clubley came along to officially open the garden and unveil the new garden sign.



The day was mainly about showcasing the garden, but there was also lots going on inside the Tove Valley Centre too. As well as a stall outside selling filled pots and hanging baskets, there were several craft stalls inside, plus a raffle, children's activities and delicious cakes and cream teas for our visitors to enjoy.

All in all it was a great event and raised just over £1500.00 to enable us to continue supporting people in our local community.

## Sponsored Cycle Ride

On 16<sup>th</sup> May, Colin Richardson took part in the Towcester Mill Brewery Cycle Sportive to raise much needed funds for renew169. Setting off from the brewery, Colin took on the 'full pint' challenge, cycling 60 miles through the Northamptonshire countryside. He raised a whopping £479.00 for us through sponsorship, with all the money raised helping us to continue the invaluable work of supporting people in our local community with their mental health. Our thanks to Colin for taking on this challenge and to everyone who very generously sponsored him.



We were delighted that lots of people came along over the course of the day to find out more about the community garden and the important work we do there. Local artist, Val Goldfinch, had very kindly created a beautiful hand-painted illustration of the garden to give visitors an idea of the layout and the tasks involved in maintaining the garden and some of our garden volunteers were on hand to show people around and give them more information.



## Mental Health Awareness Week



In May, we celebrated Mental Health Awareness Week. An event organised by the Mental Health Foundation, it is a week-long campaign that highlights the importance of good mental health, challenges stigma and promotes practical actions people can take to support their own wellbeing. We supported the campaign with information and activities throughout the week, including a fun online quiz, an evening craft workshop on the Wednesday, and 'Wear it Green' Day on the Thursday, as well as selling pin badges to support the work of the Mental Health Foundation.

Our book-folding event, in conjunction with Towcester Library, was held on the Wednesday evening. It was a very pleasant and relaxing way to while away a couple of hours, whilst learning a new skill and chatting with new found friends. What's more we came away with these super hedgehog book sculptures for our bookshelves. Our thanks went to Lucy Holton-Monk from Towcester Library for leading this session.



Wear it Green Day is all about raising awareness and starting conversations about mental health to show that mental health matters and that no-one is alone. Why green? Well, green represents growth, renewal, and well-being, making it the chosen colour for mental health advocacy. Lots of people joined in on the Thursday by wearing green clothing or proudly sporting their mental health awareness pin badges, both in the café and at the community garden. Here are a selection of photographs from the day:





WEARING IT GREEN!

Why not have a go at this fun quiz from the Mental Health Foundation and test your knowledge about mental health facts, statistics and myths? Questions and answers (deliberately upside down!) below:

# QUIZ

1. What river runs through Paris?
2. In which country did the BBC show The Traitors originate from and what was it called?
3. This country is often referred to as what?
4. Which character famously says, "It's not easy being green"?
5. How many minutes in a game of rugby league?
6. Where was the Winter Olympics held this year?
7. True or False. One in five adults has a common mental health condition?
8. What is the highest mountain in Britain?
9. How many teeth does an adult human have?
10. Which iconic musical turned film features a witch with green skin?
11. What is the only food that never spoils?
12. Is the sun a star or a planet?
13. How many seasons of Stranger Things are there?
14. What green drink has become all the rage in recent years?
15. What animal alive today is even bigger than a dinosaur?
16. Last year a major crown jewels heist from the Louvre rocked Paris, but how much were the jewels worth?
17. Where are the 2028 Olympics going to be held?
18. Mental Health Foundation is the home of Mental Health Awareness Week, but what year did the week first start?
19. Which country is nicknamed the "Emerald Isle"?
20. What is the largest bone in the human body?
21. The men's football world cup returns this year, but when was the last time all 4 home nations (England, Wales, Scotland & Northern Ireland) qualified for the competition?
22. In 2025, the world became obsessed with a little accessory you can add to your bag. What is it called?
23. What do people often call the act of writing down thoughts and feelings to support wellbeing?
24. Which London Underground line is represented as green on the tube map?
25. Which Tennis Grand Slam is played on a clay surface?
26. What is the smallest planet in our solar system?
27. After the passing of Pope Francis in April 2025, Pope Leo XIV was elected on May 8th, but where was Pope Leo born?
28. This year's Super Bowl was nicknamed Benito Bowl due to Bad Bunny's Half Time performance but which team won the game?
29. What colour is an aircraft's famous "black box"?
30. The theme for Mental Health Awareness Week 2026 is Action. What 3 actions are the Mental Health Foundation asking us to take?

## ANSWERS

1. Seine / 2. De Varraders, The Netherlands / 3. Holland / 4. Kermit the Frog / 5. Eighty / 6. Italy / 7. True  
 8. Ben Nevis / 9. Thirty Two / 10. Wicked 11. Honey / 12. A star / 13. Five / 14. Matcha / 15. The Blue Whale  
 16. £76 million / 17. Los Angeles / 18. 2001, celebrating 25 years this year! / 19. Ireland / 20. The Femur  
 21. 1958 / 22. Labubu 23. Journalism / 24. The District Line / 25. The French Open / 26. Mercury  
 27. Chicago, Illinois / 28. Seattle Seahawks / 29. Orange / 30. An action for yourself, for someone else or for all of us.

## In other news...

Jemma Campanaro (Charity Manager) and Paul Saxton (Trustee) were back on the radio in May, promoting the charity renew169 and the work that we do. This time, they were interviewed on to the 'Undiscovered Northampton' show on local community station, NLive Radio. They talked to the host Paul Brennecke about the café and the community garden as well as the monthly Repair Café, which takes place on the last Saturday of each month. Our thanks to the team at NLive for this opportunity to talk about our work.



Then on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June, Anita Solan and Amanda Selvey went along to the Greens Norton Fifty Plus Club to talk about renew169. Anita gave a presentation to the group and they also took along some cakes and other bits & bobs to sell, as well as various leaflets about the charity itself, volunteering with us and the different activities we offer. They had a lovely morning and were made very welcome. Thanks to a donation from the club and the generosity of its members in

purchasing cakes and items for sale, they came away with £150.00, which will go towards our work supporting the local community in Towcester and the surrounding villages.



On 28<sup>th</sup> June, Paul & Judy Saxton and Jemma Campanaro went along once again to the always popular St. Lawrence Church Fête. They took a selection of filled pots and hanging baskets, which had been potted up and filled at the Community Garden, as well as lots of sunflowers (due to popular demand last year!) They had a super time, as always, and made around £200.00 in total from plant sales, including the proceeds from a few hanging baskets which were sold after the event.





**Chantry House, Watling Street,  
Towcester, (between the Post Office  
and the Town Hall)**

**Sat 5 September, 10.30AM ~3.30PM**

**Raising Funds for  
Renew169 Wellbeing Cafe**

**renew169**  
A quiet shared space in Towcester  
where it's OK not to be OK

Registered Charity 1196631

# DANCE & COCKTAIL NIGHT

HOSTED BY THE



30<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER

7:30PM – 9:30PM

TOVE VALLEY  
BAPTIST CENTER,  
TOWCESTER

FEATURING

SONGBIRDS

*Singing for the Soul*

*Swing • Dance • Cocktails • Great Company*

## COME DRESSED FOR GLAMOUR!

OTHER BAR BEVERAGES  
★ ALSO AVAILABLE ★

AN EVENING OF LIVE BIG BAND MUSIC,  
DANCING AND CLASSIC COCKTAILS.

## Dates for your Diary!

Please make a note of the following important dates. Further information about these events will follow in due course:

- Craft & Produce Fair with Cream Teas on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September
- Dance & Cocktail Night at the Tove Valley centre on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October
- Quiz Night at Towcester Mill Brewery on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November
- Christmas Craft Fayre at Towcester Mill Brewery on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November

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**We run a wellbeing café and a community garden available for anyone struggling with their emotional or mental health: quiet spaces in Towcester where it's okay to not be okay.**



Contact us:

Email: [manager@renew169.org.uk](mailto:manager@renew169.org.uk)

169 Watling Street

Towcester

Telephone: 07761 041203

(Monday to Friday, between 10am and 3pm)

Website: [www.renew169.org.uk](http://www.renew169.org.uk)

Registered Charity Number: 1196631

## 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/month:

### Tuesdays

- Community Garden, located at the Tove Valley Centre, open from 10.30am – 1pm
- Lunch Club (soup & toasted sandwiches), 12pm.
  - Join us on a Tuesday afternoon from 1pm for our weekly craft activity

### Wednesdays

- 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.
- Creative Nights take place on the third Wednesday of each month from 7-9pm. Anyone can come along to meet and socialise with others, whilst participating in craft activities. Complete a project you have started at home or try something new.

### Thursdays

- Community Garden, located at the Tove Valley Centre, open from 10.30am – 1pm

### Fridays

- Grief, Comfort & Coffee, 10 – 11.30am. Free wellbeing support for any type of grief or loss.
- Pre-organised afternoon wellbeing sessions with Sponne School.
- Renew for Youth, 3.15-4.45pm, term time only. Wellbeing café for young people aged 11-17.

### Saturdays

- Towcester Repair Café takes place on the fourth Saturday of each month, from 10am – 12 noon. Bring along your broken items to be repaired. No need to book.

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### IMPORTANT NOTICE:

**As we are currently in temporary accommodation, please check via our website /social media channels, or by contacting us, that activities are in fact taking place and whereabouts they will be located.**

**Thank you!**



