From our founder



Welcome to Regenesis.

For me, Regenesis began with a family story. Members of my family were imprisoned in Terezín. My grandfather escaped Nazi persecution and went on to serve in the Royal Air Force. Years later, I learnt about the Windermere Children, young Holocaust survivors who were flown from Prague to an RAF airfield near Carlisle in 1945. From there they travelled to Windermere, where they were given the time and space to begin rebuilding their lives. Some went on to settle in Manchester.

I wanted to understand that journey better, so I walked from Terezín to Prague and, back in England, every step from Carlisle to Windermere. There was something important to me about walking away from Terezín. By the time I reached Windermere, I had begun to think about what the places along that journey could teach us about the Holocaust, what it means to lose your home and how people begin again when they find refuge.

That idea became the Regenesis Experience, which is open to learners of all ages. Our schools programme starts in the classroom and continues outdoors. In Windermere, pupils use maps to find their way, work together and hear what happened to the children who arrived there in 1945. They have time to ask questions and talk about what they've heard.

I wanted the visit to do several things well in a single day. A school can bring history, geography, outdoor learning and teamwork together through one visit, making better use of teaching time and the school trip budget. It also gives pupils different ways into the same story. One child might be drawn in by navigating the route, another by a question about how the children felt when they arrived. In our Manchester school visits, pupils brought different family histories and experiences to those conversations. For many, it was also their first visit to the Lake District.

Through Regenesis Next Generation, we help teachers and youth leaders use this approach with their own schools and groups. Our endurance walking programme offers another way to explore the history. Participants can walk from Terezín to Prague and from Carlisle to Windermere, retracing two stages of the journey that brought the children to the Lake District.

My family's journey is one of many. My ambition is to make the landscape of that journey the classroom for the next generation.

Thank you for taking the time to find out about Regenesis.

Marc Duschenes

Executive Founder and Project Lead, Regenesis Events CIC