

THE SCOTTISH SHEDDER

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE SMSA



SCOTTISH
MEN'S SHEDS
ASSOCIATION

"In Scotland, For Scotland"

Edition 31 | December 2022

**Save the SMSA:
Call to action for
men's health support**



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SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM ALL AT THE SMSA...

We wish to take this opportunity to thank our members, partners and funders for supporting the SMSA and the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement as a whole. We wish you all a Shed-tastic Christmas and look forward to working with you all in 2023!

The SMSA office will close for the festive period on Friday 16th December 2022, as our team takes remaining annual leave for a well-earned break, and will re-open on Monday 9th January 2023.

The Scottish Shedder (the official FREE magazine of the Scottish Men's Sheds Association) promotes news from Men's Sheds across Scotland to showcase their successes (and challenges)—in addition to highlighting funding opportunities, DIY projects, recipes and much more—to inform and inspire. Each six-weekly issue is sent digitally to over 3,100 Individual Member subscribers and supporters of the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement.

Contribute to The Scottish Shedder

We want to hear all about your Shed, its latest developments and exciting projects and are therefore asking for your contributions for future issues. We urge you to maximise the potential to raise the profile of your Shed and the Men's Sheds Movement in Scotland. Email Michelle Wibrew, SMSA Communications & PR Officer, at comms@scottishmsa.org.uk

Subscribe to the Scottish Shedder

To subscribe to receive 'The Scottish Shedder', you must become an Individual Member of the SMSA. It is FREE to join at www.scottishmsa.org.uk/join-smsa

Past issues

Archived editions available in the [SMSA online library](#) (log-in required)

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Support the Men's Sheds Movement in Scotland, follow the SMSA at:



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TALKING SHEDS

by Jason Schroeder

Greetings from the far north and a ho ho ho to you all. I hope the kettles are being used more than ever as the cold starts getting serious and the hot water bottles are being safely strapped around your waists as the electricity costs keep on their upward trajectory.

Several Sheds have opened on non Shed days and evenings as warm places for their community. Once again, you men keep raising the bar of community kindness and connection, outstanding.

A few weeks ago the great flood rampaged across Aberdeenshire, the worst I have experienced in living here for 25 years and stopped me from getting to the office to head up the AGM and 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' Awards 2022. The event had to be postponed and we heard on the news about -8 temperature looming but luckily our event took place and was a great success.

Before the disturbing news I have to share with you all, I will give you the good news which is one of our partner tool suppliers [Axminster](#) have raised the Shed member discount from 5% to 10% (see [page 6](#) for full details) which when buying lathes and so forth can be substantial – perfect timing for Xmas.

The other good news is that Bancon Homes have formalised our office lease agreement (see [page 5](#)) and will sponsor us for free for the coming year (£5,000), which is fantastic news especially before the news I am about to tell you.



VIDEO: A plea from SDSA Chief Executive Officer Jason Schroeder (click here to watch)

If you have not already heard or signed our petition to the First Minister and Deputy First Minister please take the time to visit <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/scottish-men-s-sheds-call-for-men-s-health-support>.

With an alarming rise in suicide amongst Scottish men - 75% of the people who died by suicide in Scotland last year were male—and we have the unenviable statistic of the highest rate in Europe.

Our men and our families need a better support system for men's health and the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement is exactly that but with this great success comes greater responsibility and support.

We need some **proper statutory investment** in this relatively new health movement (13 years old) like we see in the two most successful Men's Sheds Movement countries. Australia, where it all started, and Ireland – the fastest growing Shed movement per capita out of 11 Men's Sheds Association countries.

Both of these national Associations receive **statutory funding**. Australia since 2010 - \$3 million per year plus \$1 million start up and development fund—and Ireland, €500,000. We have received between £45,000 and £75,000 per year since 2016 and we are now over capacity in supporting you with our present staff as the demand for our services increases again post Covid.

The SDSA is lobbying for a directional change by the Scottish Government who has stopped our funding in 2023 with no reason given.

A brief history of how we got here...

SDSA had a meeting in November 2021 with the new Minister for Public Finance, Planning and Community Wealth Tom Arthur MSP who the SDSA presently sits under which comprised of myself, our Chairman and our Patron and former chief medical officer for Scotland,



Sir Harry Burns. I proposed a meeting with two other Ministers who we feel we should be under statutory funding responsibilities which is Kevin Stewart MSP, Minister for Mental Wellbeing and Social Care and Christina MacKelvie MSP, Minister for Equalities and Older People (Isolation and Loneliness) – a new trilateral shared funding responsibility. Tom Arthur MSP was very supportive and said he would call a meeting with the other two Ministers in February 2022. He did this but we heard no outcome until the night before the Men's Sheds parliamentary debate called by Shed Champion Christine Grahame MSP (www.youtube.com/watch?v=T4NFwTf3qpM) on the 16th June 2022 when I received a letter telling us they would give us £75,000 for the 2022-23 year and no more.

In the debate, he said we had to go to big business to support the SMSA, a national health charity, and apply to a certain grant which looks like it now will not be available. (£10 million Isolation and Loneliness Fund).

We had proposed to the Minister that we now required substantial statutory funding like we see in Australia and Ireland as the movement was growing exponentially and the volunteers of the movement required more support from us.

As per our [Manifesto](#) aims, we will be the central body to work with government as we have been doing since 2016 and to also have a start up and development funding for the Sheds.

The investment required is £380,000 core funding and £200,000 Shed development funding per year for the next three years.

Continued on next page...

TALKING SHEDS

by Jason Schroeder

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In November 2022, [Ireland's Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys, announced funding of €800,000](#) to support Men's Sheds. "Our Men's Sheds provide an absolutely invaluable service in communities the length and breadth of the country.

"They help tackle isolation and provide a welcoming and comfortable space for men to come together and socialise. And as we enter the winter period, the supports that our Men's Sheds provide are even more important. So I'm delighted to be in a position to support our Men's Sheds with funding of over €800,000. This will assist our Men's Sheds with grants of €2,000, which they can use to cover their running costs or carry out small improvements at their premises."

She also set aside €100 000 to help the upcoming and developing Women's Sheds.

The Irish Men's Sheds Association has also received government and European recognition of their contribution to Ireland. In 2018, the Association received the European Citizen's Award after being nominated by Irish MEPs. Why do our MSP's and Ministers not financially back their national Association who is doing the same work for their members and the Scottish people with pride like their Irish counterparts?



Now is not the time to abandon and disinvest in this successful men's health movement that is voluntarily engaging with and reaching men and changing and saving

lives. Our volunteers need our support now more than ever as evidenced by the ever-increasing growth in our membership.

As we near the 10-year anniversary of the opening of the first Men's Shed in Scotland, we now celebrate over 200 open and developing Men's Sheds groups across Scotland (in all 32 local authority areas) reaching and supporting 10,000+ men aged 18 or over. This year, we also welcomed the completion and findings of our four-year partnership with Glasgow Caledonian University's research (£150,000 - National Lottery Community Fund) - [Sheds for Sustainable Development Project](#).

Our three-year development plans (2023-2026) have taken into account this research and core statutory developmental funding is required if the movement is to not only continue to grow but remain sustainable for its volunteers and their health and wellbeing. We strongly believe that the current number of Men's Shed groups in Scotland (202 with a third in development) has only reached just under half (45%) of what it could be. To ensure the charity is around next year and many years to come to support future generations of Sheddors and keep the spotlight on men's health we need your support now. [Write to your MSP's](#) and [sign and share the petition](#). Signatures means votes.

As a result of this, I regret to advise that there may be no Scottish Shedder magazine in February as we concentrate all our efforts on securing funding from other sources unless the Ministers realise they can make it right and get behind us and promote what one MP has recently said, ['... ending core support in 2023 will be a major blow to one of the greatest mental and physical health developments of this generation.'](#)

So I call for you to rally around us, get your Sheddors to support the petition, get them signing in the Sheds and share with friends and family. We are now fighting for our

very survival and to many developing shed groups and open sheds the impact felt by us closing up shop next year will be a major blow and set back the movement irrevocably.

If we want healthier men, if we want to create a healthier and wellbeing economy, if we want less suffering in our families, if we want better community engagement with intergenerational mentoring opportunities, if we want a better life for the people of Scotland – this is the best chance we have ever had with a grass roots movement and we see these benefits and how they are achieving it in our neighbouring country of Ireland.

I urge you to pick up the pen, I urge you to speak about it and I urge you to empower yourself with us to make this difference in your life and the many hundreds of thousands across Scotland.

Sign and share the petition at <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/scottish-men-s-sheds-call-for-men-s-health-support>

Let's make this a Merry Christmas and change five peoples minds in our government who very easily if they have the will can come out on the right side of this situation for the **wellbeing of the people they represent**, the people of Scotland.

I am sorry that it is has come to this but here we are. I wish you all the very best it can be for you, your families, your communities and your Sheds.

Spread the love, be kind and keep your generous hearts open, may we have peace and joy wherever you are.

Jason Schroeder
SMSA Chief Executive Officer





Bancon Homes formalises partnership with the SMSA

Luxury homebuilder **Bancon Homes** has announced that it has formalised its partnership with the Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA).

As part of the arrangement, the company will provide one year of rent-free accommodation for the SMSA's headquarters at the Banchory Business Centre where it has resided since 2016.

The SMSA is the national association providing support and resources to 200+ Men's Shed groups across Scotland. Its sole focus is to inspire and support men over the age of 18 with time on their hands to become engaged, in a healthy way, by voluntarily creating their own Men's Sheds in their local communities across Scotland. The Association provides practical help, information and advice for Shedders throughout their journey from the initial seed of an idea to the running of a successful and sustainable Men's Shed.

Allan Clow, Managing Director of Bancon Homes (pictured with Jason above) said: "Providing a home for people is what we do so we are delighted to support this incredible charity, ensuring they retain their office space and are able to deliver their important services. Men's Sheds build communities and create an environment for people to come together and this in turn, reduces social isolation and loneliness and that too is our vision for our developments and the communities we work within."

Jason Schroeder, SMSA Chief Executive, said: "Bancon has always been extremely supportive of the SMSA and our work to support Men's Sheds across Scotland and we are delighted with this charitable act to reduce the running costs of the charity."

"This means even more during an extremely difficult time when many charities like us are struggling with the current cost of living crisis and all applying for the same pots of grant funding out there whilst trying to recover from a pandemic and still deliver services."

"This extremely kind gesture provides our charity with the foundation to remain open to support this fast-paced grassroots movement that exists to improve the health and wellbeing of men and support their communities."

Bancon Homes



Figures as at end of November 2022



147
SMSA SHED
MEMBERS

3,165

SMSA INDIVIDUAL
MEMBERS



136
OPEN SHEDS

66

DEVELOPING/
PROPOSED SHEDS



32
LOCAL AUTHORITY
AREAS

UPDATE YOUR DETAILS WITH THE SMSA



New email address?
Moved house?



Change of Office
Bearers? New Chair?



Not sure if you are a
member or not?

If any of your information has
changed, don't forget to let us know

[Click here to notify the SMSA](#)

Axminster doubles its discount to Scottish Men's Sheds

Christmas has come early for Scottish Men's Sheds as the Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) and its partner, [Axminster](#), announce that the market leader in the mail order tools and machinery industry will double its discount to SMSA Shed Members from 5% to 10%.

In order to access these savings, Shed members are required to contact a member of the SMSA Team ([Michelle Wibrew, Communications Officer](#) or [Jason Schroeder, CEO](#)) in the first instance to advise that your Shed wishes to set up an exclusive SMSA/Axminster account. The SMSA will then provide you with a link to the online application form.

Once the application is submitted and approved, the Axminster team will then create a new account record for the applying Shed and assign the discount which entitles most purchases through the Shed to the 10% discount.

AXMINSTER Tools & Machinery

Products that are already on promotion are excluded from the discount and there are also a couple of exceptions including branded power tools: Bosch; Makita; Festool; and DeWalt.

The discount applies to the 'Shed' rather than 'Shedders' however if the Shed is happy to manage orders from its members, then those orders can be placed through the Shed account. So, your members can benefit too even if they are not buying directly for the Shed.

The SMSA aims to support and inspire Scottish Men's Shed to sustainability and hope that this increased discount will save you money when buying new or replacing machines from one of the UK's biggest tool providers.

Men's health animation promotes keeping the 'three nuts' healthy

The Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) has launched the second in a series of men's health animations with the latest encouraging men to keep a check on their 'three nuts' and to take quick action if they experience any changes.

The [three-minute animation](#) entitled 'The Three Amigos' focuses in on men's sex lives and toilet habits to draw attention to possible health issues men can experience like the changes in the hidden 'third nut', the prostate gland, which is usually the size and shape of a walnut inside the body.

The prostate can enlarge as we get older causing peeing habits to change and can also become cancerous. The characters and theme aim to attract men of all ages to watch and learn in an educational, entertaining and informal way. The animation features different thematic scenes as the organs have their own very unique characters, 'The Three Amigos', medical information and the benefits of attending a Scottish Men's Shed.

SMSA Founder and Chief Executive Officer Jason Schroeder said: "We are extremely proud of how the national association has a targeted educational health element to the services we provide and how we work in co-production with our partners to promote their specialised services."

"We also worked with various Scottish Shedders who had experienced prostate cancer and Prostate Scotland who deliver awareness raising presentations in the Sheds. We were very lucky to get the famous and much-loved Scottish actor Ron Emslie while he was performing the one man show, Man Shed at the Edinburgh Fringe to do the voice over which is so important in this type of media."

"Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer in men and as we age, the risk of developing this type of cancer increases significantly however it can also still affect younger men too. Through this latest short film, we aim to raise awareness of the symptoms for men to look out



for and to talk to their GP's, fellow Shed members and nearest and dearest, and to not suffer in silence which can often be the case with some men.

"The Men's Shed environment is a welcoming and friendly place where men come together socially and feel safe enough to have these conversations amongst themselves. Shed members will often find that there are other men who have been through the same journey as them and can offer unique and invaluable advice and support."

"Early detection is key and this is one of the most successfully treatable cancers. Through this film, we aim to educate and inform, encourage men to talk and reach out for support and ultimately, save lives."

[Watch 'The Three Amigos'.](#)

Social Spaces, Warm Places and Smiling Faces

Having created successful and well-equipped workshops, some Men's Sheds are now turning towards making a social space that is a warm home from home to allow Shedders toiling with tools, wood and metal to have a place to rest, recuperate, relax and socialise with those less interested in the practical side of the Shed.

A whole range of activities takes place in the social area. In most Sheds this takes the form of tea, coffee, biscuits, home baking, putting the world to rights, having a laugh, banter and camaraderie.

In addition to this, some Sheds are providing hot meals, pool, darts, arts and crafts, carpet bowls, indoor archery, card games, dominoes, bocchia, jigsaw puzzles, books, IT, music, model railways, board games, Zoom socials, Dungeons and Dragons, quizzes and talks.

Some Sheds hold their social sessions at different times closing the workshop so there is no need for a Shed supervisor on site to ensure safe operating. As a solutions-focussed approach to rising energy costs more and more Sheds are opening their social spaces to become 'warm places' mainly for their members but also for the local community.

It is a challenge for Sheds in these colder months to make sure that as well providing warmth, hearty soups and drinks that Shedders are not being too sedentary away from the workshop. People get warm and maintain body temperature the more active they are. Sheds are keen to promote the health and wellbeing of their members. To this end, some Sheds have widened their range of activities to include walking, fitness equipment, bicycles, tai chi, yoga and walking football, rugby and hockey.

If you are looking for ideas about how you can build physical activity in your Shed in a fun, social and proportionate way then Age Scotland's Healthy Active Ageing Trainer is available to host tasters of their fun active games, Body Boosting Bingo or Power Quiz, online or in-person. These games incorporate light physical movements that develop strength, balance and flexibility in older adults, and that are based on research evidence. There are seated and standing options for each movement to accommodate all bodies and abilities.

To find out more and book a taster session email: healthandwellbeing@agescotland.org.uk or call 0333 323 2400 and ask to speak to the Health and Wellbeing Team.

Enjoy the festive season and stay kind, warm and well. I look forward to catching up with you in your Shed and/or at one of Shed Network meetings in 2023.

Upcoming Shed Network Meetings:

- Aberdeen City / Aberdeenshire – Wednesday 18th January 2023 at Ellon Men's Shed from 10am
- Fife – Thursday 19th January 2023 at Kirkcaldy Men's Shed from 11am
- Dundee and Angus – Monday 30th January 2023 at Carnoustie and Monifeith Men's Shed from 11am
- Lothians – Tuesday 24th January 2023 at Musselburgh Men's Shed from 10.30am
- Ayrshire – Friday 17th February 2023 at Irvine Newtown Men's Shed from 12.45pm
- Greater Glasgow and Clyde – Tuesday 14th March 2023 at Inverclyde Shed from 10am

If you are interested in attending, please get in touch.

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SCOTTISH MEN'S SHED OF THE YEAR 2022



Men's Shed Govan takes home the 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' title

The Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) announces the winner of the 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' Awards 2022 as Men's Shed Govan.

The awards event capped off weeks of public voting for three worthy finalists – Inverurie & District Men's Shed, Lanark Men's Shed and Men's Shed Govan – as they battled it out to get their communities and supporters behind them to cast those all-important votes.

With over 200 open or developing Men's Shed groups now in existence across all 32 local authority areas in Scotland, Men's Shed Govan was unveiled as the winner - live by the SMSA at the awards ceremony on Tuesday 6th December 2022. Inverurie & District Men's Shed then pipped Lanark Men's Shed to the post to claim second place.

Commenting on the award, Men's Shed Govan Chairman Martin Haddow, said: "We are delighted to win this award. We have purposefully offered a wide and varied range of activities to meet our members' needs – after all, not everyone likes woodwork and that is not the be all and end of Men's Sheds. There is such a strong sense of camaraderie and the Shed has improved the quality of lives of its members by giving them a purpose, people to talk to and things to try and do.

"We are extremely proud to have turned a previously derelict nursery and undeveloped outdoor space that was being used as a dumping ground into a vital resource for our community that is hugely benefitting the physical and mental health and wellbeing of 70+ members."

Men's Shed Govan, which became a Scottish charity in January 2018, has a strong 'make it, build it, grow it' ethos with activities on offer including arts and crafts, photography, music, model railway, cooking/baking, bike repairs, woodworking and growing vegetables and herbs in their raised beds and polytunnel in the Shed garden and nearby allotments. Their events over the years include art classes, Tai Chi, wicker craft, community fairs, musical events, quiz nights, author talks and day trips to name but a few.

Award-winning practice nurse Sarah Everett, who won the Royal College of Nursing Institute Patients Choice Award for UK and the Glasgow Times Community Champion Award in 2019, set up the Shed when she saw an unmet need in Govan. Interested members came together to refurbish a derelict ex-nursery into their new Shed premises. Sarah began offering health checks to members on a voluntary basis and she also gave advice on long-term conditions.

The Sheddies are encouraged to keep fit through the use of their exercise room and plan to start outdoor walks and cycle rides. The Shed hosts healthy talks on topics such as prostate cancer, bowel cancer, Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm screening and First Aid and has created partnerships and worked on projects for local schools and hospices. The Shed also offers a garden tidy service for older people and provides produce from its allotment and polytunnel to a local food poverty project, Moogety Community Meals.

Following the tragic death of one of their Sheddies' family members, George Benson, the Shed understood that he could have survived if there had been a defibrillator nearby. Making it their mission to secure this life-saving kit, the Shed organised a sponsored 12-hour Exercise-a-thon, where they worked as a team to use their exercise bike, treadmill and cross-trainer in relay for a constant 12-hour period - raising £1,645 towards the cause. The local church then raised £375 through their congregation to hit the target to install a defibrillator for use to the general public 24 hours a day.

Jason Schroeder, SMSA Chief Executive Officer, said: "The purpose of the awards is two-fold – we unite to recognise and celebrate the often-unsung contributions made by Men's Sheds and the men, who are all volunteers, that attend them. Additionally, the awards exist to break down the perceptions that Sheds are just for older, retired men, that want to tinker in the workshop. They are so much more than that and Men's Shed Govan certainly highlights this. Each of the Men's Sheds groups across Scotland is unique in that the activities it offers is led by the members' needs to benefit the health and wellbeing of all local men aged 18 or over.

"For the awards this year, we received the largest number of applications and public votes to date and it is fantastic to see the public rally together to support a vital resource in their communities."

Men's Shed Govan will now receive the esteemed targe trophy – created and designed by former SMSA Chairman Derek Keiller and several Men's Shed members – engraved with the Shed name and displayed in a unique stand designed and produced by inaugural winner, Aberchirder & District Men's Shed. The two runners up will also receive a replica of the trophy, created by David Young Training, to be displayed in their Sheds to recognise them as 2022 finalists.

The winner and runners-up also receive a range of prizes from the SMSA and their partners and sponsors. Men's Shed Govan receives over £2,300 of prizes to support their Shed including a £500 cash prize from the SMSA (paid for through SMSA Shed Membership fees); a £150 voucher from [Axminster Tools](#); a £250 voucher from [Scotmid Co-operative](#); a £400 cabinet tool kit from [Cromwell](#); a free Machine Competency and Woodwork training day from [David Young Training](#) worth £660; a year's free Shed accounts package from [Thyme Accountants](#) worth £360 to support the Shed Treasurer; and goodies from Scottish shortbread maker, [Dean's of Huntly](#).

Men's Shed Govan is open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10am – 2pm. All welcome. For more information, visit their [website](#).

SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Donald Peers, Secretary of Rhins Men's Shed in Stoneykirk, Dumfries and Galloway shares their seven-year journey and how they turned a run-down village hall into a hive of Shed activity for their 50+ members.

Donald said: "Back in 2015, Michael Greasley and I had heard of Men's Sheds and had discussed the potential of setting one up in our local area. We heard that start-up funding was available for a Men's Shed through our local NHS Building Healthier Communities initiative so got to work to set up our first public meeting. The meeting, sponsored by the NHS, was held in Stranraer Library on the 20th October 2015 to ascertain local interest.

"Ian McMaster, a member of the first Scottish Men's Shed—Westhill & District Men's Shed—was invited along to be a guest speaker and explain the concept to the 27 attendees and highlight the benefits to men's health and wellbeing.

"At the meeting (pictured below left), a steering group was selected and it was agreed to start the search for appropriate premises, to draft a constitution and apply for charitable status.



"Charity status was granted on the 8th March 2016 however finding premises in our local town was proving impossible so we approached Dumfries and Galloway Council in regards to their community asset transfer program and identified suitable premises at St. Stephens in Stoneykirk on a 25-year, £1 per annum, lease agreement.

"We have received a wealth of support over the years to transform the old village hall building to meet our needs. The majority of funding has been generated through our projects and from local donations. We have also received support and grants from Age Scotland, Foundation Scotland, The Galloway Association of Glasgow, the NHS, Groundwork, The Robertson Trust, Shennanton Sawmill, Stranraer Development Trust, South West Environmental Action Trust (SWEAT), Tesco Bags of Help and the Scottish Men's Sheds Association.

"It has not been plain sailing by any means. We have encountered numerous difficulties mostly administrative over the years with banks and planning permission to name but a few. After the first year, we were self-sufficient until lockdown but then applied for grants to kickstart us again.

Continued on next page...



SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT (Continued)



Before



After

...continued from previous page

"The Shed has a well-equipped woodwork shop (pictured below right) and we pride ourselves on being able to produce, upcycle or repair pretty much anything for local schools, charities or private customers. General production is the usual mix of benches, bird boxes, planters and so on which generates income for the Shed.

"One of our best projects was when we were granted funds to purchase materials to manufacture benches and picnic tables which were subsequently donated to various organisations from care homes to footpaths. We also work with the REMAP Scotland project and have also twice manufactured picnic tables for the Stranraer Oyster Festival, signage for the Skiffie World Championships and more recently got involved in the creation of pop-up gardens for the Dandelion project. We are well known locally as the place that can 'make one of those'

"We also have space for members to work on crafts or other hobbies. One member is building a model of the HMS Victory which has been ongoing for over 30 years. It may be finished one day.

"Pre-Covid, our active membership was around 18-20 active members per session however this has now dropped to 10-12—which is currently a good workable number for our limited space—but we are confident that numbers will rise as members slowly return at their own pace. Some members just like to call in for the tea and the craic.

"During the pandemic, and living in a rural area, we mainly kept in touch with members by email and phone.



We suggested Zoom but our members either did not want to meet online or did not have the technology (or know how to use it). We have just received some iPads from the Digital Inclusion Fund to get out to our members so hopefully this will improve over time. We were able to organise the sprucing up of the exterior whilst physically distancing ourselves to progress with the work in hand.

"We have had a few social outings to visit other Sheds and our local aircraft museum. The Christmas meal is always popular however the general consensus, which is great, is that the members wish to stay in the Shed and enjoy the company there.

"An upcoming concern for the future of the Shed is the sudden increase in electricity costs which could hit us hard. The fear is that we could end up spending all our time producing to earn funds with the risk of losing the concept of 'Tea and Craic'."

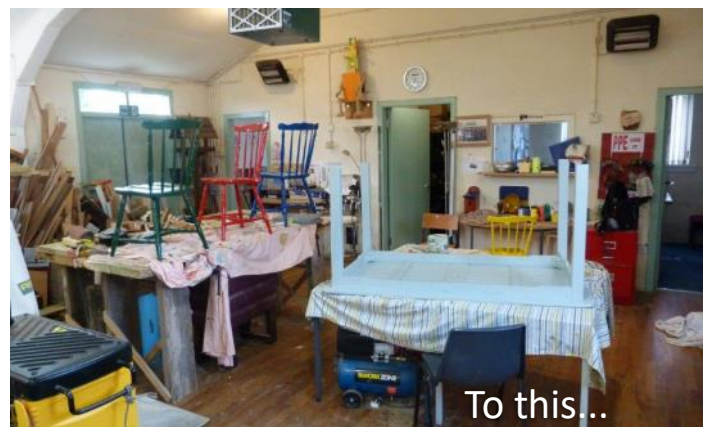
"The Shed has enhanced the lives of so many members who would otherwise stop at home and watch TV. We have certainly seen more of a need for the Shed since Covid so we need to ensure we are still here. However, it would be nice going forward to see more members take on roles as Trustees as we are running low with only four at present and it can be extremely time consuming for us. Getting more people on board is definitely a key action for the future."

Rhins Men's Shed is located at St. Stephens, Stoneykirk in Stranraer and is open Mondays and Thursdays from 10am to 4pm.

Follow Rhins Men's Shed on [Facebook](#) for the latest updates.



From this...



To this...



Taylor Wimpey donation creates workshop cabin for Penicuik Men's Shed

As part of its ongoing commitment to working in partnership with local communities, and its support of Penicuik & District Men's Shed, [Taylor Wimpey](#) East Scotland has donated a storage unit which the Shedders are currently refurbishing to create a new workshop cabin to support their move to the existing Penicuik YMCA building.

David Russell Shed Secretary said: "The Penicuik & District Men's Shed is one of 136 Men's Sheds open across Scotland, and is a registered local charity dedicated to providing a supportive environment for men and to promote the mental, physical, emotional wellbeing of its members, as well as the economic wellbeing of others in the local community through the provision of recreational facilities and activities. A request to Taylor Wimpey led to them donating this unit. An old Scots saying 'if you don't ask, you don't get' worked out extremely well here."

Commenting on the support it has received from Taylor Wimpey East

Scotland, Jim Mallen, Vice-Chair at Penicuik & District Men's Shed said: "Our Men's Shed plays an important part within the local community to support older men. It is a place to pursue practical skills, as well as creating social connections and making friends whilst sharing knowledge and this fantastic donation of a storage unit is a great boost.

"We are extremely grateful for the support that we have received from Taylor Wimpey to date and we can't thank them enough for their latest generous donation. They have gifted us with an old site welfare unit which we are refurbishing to create a workshop cabin that will further support our new association with Penicuik YMCA and also create a functioning garden area with polytunnel and raised planter beds."

Taylor Wimpey's donation also marks a further milestone for its latest local development to launch at Greenlaw Mains in Penicuik.

Taylor Wimpey East Scotland is delighted to offer its support once again as Kirsty McGill, Sales and Marketing Director adds: "We are proud to be able to continue our

support for the Penicuik & District Men's Shed in this unusual way, which has allowed them to upcycle one of our old storage units to create a new resource they will be able to use to support their work on a variety of local projects.

"We do more than just build high-quality homes. Being able to work with local businesses and organisations that surround our developments means a great deal to us, and it's great to know that we are helping to make a difference to the lives of people in local communities."

Taylor Wimpey's donation to Penicuik & District Men's Shed is one of the many contributions being made by the housebuilder towards community facilities and infrastructure in the wider area.

To find out more about the charities and organisations that Taylor Wimpey supports, please visit www.taylorwimpey.co.uk/media-centre/news

For more information on Penicuik & District Men's Shed, follow them on [Facebook](#).



Accolade awarded to Stanley & District Men's Shed

On the 7th November 2022, Stanley and District Men's Shed (SDMS) was recognised for their tremendous efforts to create a living legacy and lasting tribute in honour of the Queen.



SDMS members and wives were invited to a civic reception held in the offices of Perth & Kinross Council where Stephen Leckie Esq, His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Perth & Kinross, presented them with an award for the planting of 160 fruit trees and 840 hedge plants as part of The Queen's Green Canopy initiative.

Mike Baillie, on behalf of SDMS, said: "This project was carried out in three phases, with the third phase completed in Spring 2022. The plantings form a community orchard containing apple, plum, pear and cherry trees and sits on the back of a 15-year lease of the land, secured in partnership with Historic Scotland.

"We, the members of the Shed, are extremely proud of this accolade, much of which is attributed to our 'gaffer', Alex Cockburn, for 'behind the scenes' negotiating, as well as the hard work of the guys who did the digging and planting. The award was a Rowan tree which was on display at Buckingham Palace for the Platinum Jubilee. The tree is now proudly planted in our Shed's community orchard (pictured right)."

Follow Stanley and District Men's Shed on [Facebook](#) for more updates.

The [Queen's Green Canopy](#) (QGC) is a nation-wide initiative created to mark the Platinum Jubilee, and was due to conclude in December – the end of the Jubilee year. Following the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, His Majesty The King wished to extend this to the end of March 2023 to give people the opportunity to plant more trees in memoriam to honour Her Majesty.





Shed projects everywhere you look in Jedburgh

SMSA's Development Officer Tim Green received a warm welcome during his visit to The Jed Shed last month and at every twist and turn of his journey he saw their Shed projects proudly on display throughout the community and keeping Jedburgh looking beautiful.

This is a community that evidently truly values their local Men's Shed. Their handiwork includes a mud kitchen at St Boswells Primary School, benches and planters in the Jedburgh Abbey ramparts, the tourist Information centre

entrance, outside the public conveniences and at their local McColl's store that also displays their items for sale in their shop window.

The Shed and its team of calligraphers also support The Royal Burgh of Jedburgh Community Council's memory stars, hearts and moons project that community members can write a personal message on and hang on the town's Christmas tree.

The Shed's festive shopfront display has also been wowing the Christmas shoppers and bringing them into the Shed and raising awareness. Visit [The Jed Shed website](#) for details of previous projects.

Milngavie and Bearsden Men's Shed supports Girlguiding

Three members of Milngavie and Bearsden Men's Shed were invited to attend their local Girlguiding Rainbows and Brownies groups to teach DIY skills.

Shed Secretary Hamish Livingstone said: "We were delighted to accept an invitation from Girlguiding to demonstrate the simple use of tools to the Rainbows (girls aged 4-7) and Brownies (girls aged 7-10). Shed members Charles, Stephen and I taught the young girls beginner's DIY skills like hammering in a nail, using screws and how to take accurate measurements.

"We used offcuts of solid insulation to make it easy for the children to succeed in hammering and screwing the nails and screws in. Lots of things were measured - their height and even the piano in the hall!

"The young ladies went on to create a hedgehog which was presented to one of the helpers on her last night. The experience was thoroughly enjoyed by all."

Follow the Shed on [Facebook](#) for the latest news.



'The Shedbellies' of Dunfermline create 'At the Menshed' song

'The Shedbellies' from Dunfermline Men's Shed have created a fab new Shed song entitled 'At the Menshed'.

The players on the recording are Tim Clark and Alastair Wood of The Shedbellies band (pictured). Watch the video here on the [SMSA You Tube channel](#) and have a wee sing-along.



Sing-along...

Work done and lonely is nae lark
When many of yer moods are turning dark
Barely any money.. get doon tae the Park
And spend some gud time at the Men's Shed

Time spent there sae much to gain
Such a gud social to ease the pain
So many fun things to kickstart the brain
Just get yersel doon tae the Men's Shed

Many you'll find there just like you
Not just for old men so you can come too
Cuppa and company or make stuff and do
It's all tae be had at the Men's Shed

Learn a new skill, share yours as well
Helping each other tae move outta hell
Just swapping stories as we all can tell
Get it aff yer chest at the Men's Shed

Don't look tae make money or lotsa wealth
Just help improve our mental health
It started in the Southern Commonwealth
You'll find it works here at the Men's Shed

If friendships and feel-good is yer aim
There's a lotta people here that feel the same
Just come along and join in the game
It's all you could want at the Men's Shed

Aultbea Men's Shed's new roof completed just in time for Christmas

The members and trustees of Aultbea Men's Shed will be kept cosy this winter thanks to a £1,000 grant from the [North Highland Initiative](#) (NHI).

The NHI's Community Infrastructure Support Programme provides grants of up to £1,000 for small initiatives in the community, tourism and support sectors in Caithness, Sutherland and Ross & Cromarty.

Shed Chairman Phil Wild said: "We are so grateful to the NHI for these

funds to enable us to provide a more robust covering to our Shed roof to withstand the gales in the North West of Scotland.

"The original felt tile covering did not stand up very well to the winter storms with the tiles blowing off, particularly in January and February 2022, and leaks appeared which required urgent attention sometimes in poor weather.

"We needed to replace the felt tiles which were supplied with the Shed kit with a more robust corrugated metal covering in order to better protect the overall structure of the Shed from future Scottish North West coast weather events.



"The members used their skills and collaborated to re-cover the roof with the corrugated metal roofing, suitably fixed with a lot of screws!"

Aultbea Men's Shed meets on Friday afternoons, 2-4pm, in the Shed behind the Church of Scotland in Aultbea.

Co-op Funeralcare supports Men's Sheds with unique donation

The UK's leading funeral provider for funerals and pre-paid plans, [Co-op Funeralcare](#), is supporting Men's Sheds in the East Glasgow and Lanarkshire areas with a unique donation of wood.

Jackie Baker, Co-op Member Pioneer Coordinator for Glasgow East & Lanarkshire, said: "This fantastic project was initiated by our colleague—Michael McCready, Funeral Service Manager for Glasgow East.

"Every month, Michael and I meet with store and depot representatives to explore different ways in which we can work with local communities to make them a better place to work, play, live and learn. It was at one such meeting that Michael raised the potential of donating wood from our Coffin Factory in Govan to local groups in the surrounding area as part of the Co-op Group's mission to zero waste.

"Michael then suggested that we offer local Men's Sheds a process to pick-up weekly loads of solid pine, oak and mahogany that were surplus to requirements directly from the factory.

"We invited [Stonehouse Men's Shed](#) to join us first to establish a process for weekly collections. The Co-op has to pay to have these off-cuts taken away but with our zero waste mission for our stores and Funeralcare, we wanted to find a way for the wood to be utilised by local groups in the community.

"Stonehouse Men's Shed started the ball rolling for us with the first collection, followed by Kirkmuirhill & Blackwood Men's Shed, Rutherglen & Cambuslang Men's Shed, Lanark Men's Shed and the WAT IF? Community Trust.

"I am currently liaising with the factory to see if there are any other slots available in December and when we can start up again in the New Year. Bothwell & Uddingston Men's Shed is next on the list for a pick-up.

"Recently, I had the pleasure of visiting Stonehouse Men's Shed to see first-hand the bat boxes (pictured right) that they have created from the wood and also present them with a Co-op Community Donation cheque for £150.

"It is fantastic to see these materials be averted from landfill and put to good use in the communities we serve."



Carluke Men's Shed secures Community Asset Transfer

Carluke Men's Shed (CMS) is celebrating an early Christmas present as they announce success with their Community Asset Transfer with South Lanarkshire Council's Housing and Technical Resources Committee for their new Shed home on Carluke's Kilmory Road.

The building, the former Wilton Cemetery House, and two outbuildings have lain empty since 2016 after previously being used as an office base for a local charity.

The Shed members have been exploring new bases as their current premises at High Mill became subject to future re-development by the Carluke Development Trust.

Shed Secretary Tom Kennedy, on behalf of Carluke Men's Shed, said: "The CMS members are absolutely delighted with this outcome. This will secure our Shed for at least the next five years and allow us to grow. The future is looking good and we are actively promoting and continuing to expand our membership (now up to 31 members). All the recent signs augur well for the future.

"We intend to roll up our sleeves to make the building fit for our purpose and clean and paint and prepare the outside garden space. We are also hoping to move our portable woodworking cabin to the new site.

"We will hopefully move into our new premises in January once all the legal discussions have been completed between our solicitor and his counterpart in South Lanarkshire Council and we officially receive the keys.

"Unfortunately, we won't have enough ground space to move our second portable cabin to the new site so we will probably have to sell it. Any interested parties can give me a call on 07763 876084."

SMSA's Development Officer Tim Green visited CMS last month and received a tour of the Leisure Centre – where the group meets every Friday – as well as both the current and new Shed premises whilst joining in for a performance with the newly-formed music group, the 'CMS Strummers' and enjoying a brew with the members in one of their branded CMS mugs.

Other activities at the Shed include ensuring the safety of their Shed items and equipment through PAT testing, carried out by Clydesdale Women's Shed, and the ultraviolet marking of all of their items carried out by the members.

Their recent events include bag-packing at Tesco last month where they raised £350 towards Shed funds in addition to a £200 donation from the supermarket presented by the Tesco Community Champion Liz Reynolds who continues to be a great supporter of CMS.

Upcoming events include another barge trip—this time with Santa on board—to Ratho and their members' Christmas party on the 16th December with Stonehouse Men's Shed members invited and their band 'Simply Shed' providing the entertainment.

Every Tuesday at the current premises at the High Mill site, the Shed offers woodturning classes from 7-9pm. The Shed also meets on Wednesdays from noon–2.30pm at the High Mill site and at Carluke Leisure Centre from noon to 2pm on Fridays and then back down to the High Mill site from 2-3pm. All welcome! Take a look at the [Carluke Men's Shed Facebook group](#) and South Lanarkshire Men's Shed Facebook Group to keep up-to-date with CMS news.





'The morale of the members has now lifted': Kinlochleven Men's Shed one step closer to fulfilling the dream

In the [October issue of The Scottish Shedder](#) (page 14), Kinlochleven Men's Shed shared their journey so far and highlighted the catch 22 situation they found themselves in striving to secure funds to open.

Tony Walters, Secretary/Treasurer of Kinlochleven Men's Shed (KMS), said: "Some funders are reluctant to support the Shed as we are not yet fully open but the irony is, we require funds to actually do this.

"We have been appealing for funders and partners to support us to make our dream a reality and were delighted when we were successful in our application to the SMSA's emergency funding pot to receive £1,200 for electrical work and to meet disabled access requirements for our Shed to make our Shed safe and accessible to all current and new members going forward.

"We got the news from the SMSA at a time when we were getting quite frustrated with being so close to making the dream a reality but unable to get the funding to complete the job. The morale of the members has now lifted and the guys are busy planning the completion of the project.

"The management team of our Shed are so grateful to the SMSA for their help. It is good to know that support from the central hub is available at such a crucial time. This action has encouraged other fund agencies to partner with us on our journey, because the SMSA brings credibility to what we are doing. We now have funding to complete our start up, all we need now is a period of good weather to complete the tasks. We hope our story will encourage other Shed members to support the SMSA [lobbying the Scottish government](#) for additional funding, so they can help other start-up Sheds like ours.

"An added encouragement was that shortly after this conversation, I also received a donation from the [People's Postcode Trust \(Magic Little Grants\)](#) which was a recommendation from the SMSA in their 'Shedloads of Opportunities' bulletin which amongst other things contains a list of potential funding pots for Sheds. It was another wee boost for the Shed."

Follow Kinlochleven Men's Shed on [Facebook](#) for their latest news.

Houston and Killellan Men's Shed presents Shed Songscape

On Wednesday 16th November 2022, Houston and Killellan Men's Shed presented a short [five-minute songscape film](#) sharing what the Shed means to them and the impact it has had as part of a Year of the Stories 2022 multi-media event entitled 'Celebrating the Tales and Legends of Houston Past, Present and Future'.

Scotland's Year of the Stories 2022—a celebration of stories inspired by, written, or created in Scotland—has seen a whole host of events celebrated across the nation this year by community groups, museums, culture and heritage organisations as well as visitor attractions.

Jim McLaughlin from Houston and Killellan Men's Shed said: "This was a truly collaborative project carried out over several months with our wonderful community.

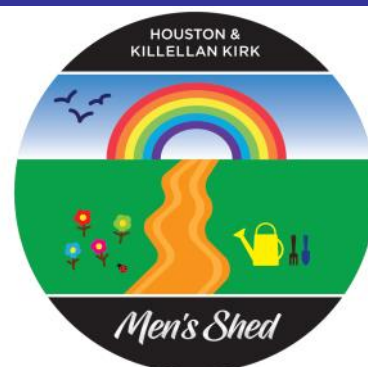
"We were delighted to be asked to participate in this event alongside our local schools and nurseries, singer/songwriter Yvonne Lyon, Houston History Society, Houston Heritage and many others to make this happen."

The EventScotland event was supported by the 'Year of Stories 2022 Community Stories' Fund. This fund was delivered in partnership with VisitScotland and Museums Galleries Scotland with support from National Lottery Heritage Fund thanks to National Lottery players.

Jim added: "As part of the 'present' Houston, the Shed members participated in a short storyboard film which captures the every day activities of the Shed and conveys what it means to the members who attend each week through a mélange of music and their words and phrases.

"We wish to share this film with The Scottish Shedder readers as it will no doubt resonate with many Sheddies across Scotland."

[Click here to watch the film.](#)





Dunoon Shedd presented with Queen's Award for Voluntary Service crystal and certificate

The Lord-Lieutenant for Argyll and Bute Mrs Jane McLeod, accompanied by Lieutenant Colonel Peter McDill—Depute for Dunoon and East Cowal, presented Dunoon Community Shed with [The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service](#) (QAVS) last month.



The Shed won the accolade in June of this year for delivering exceptional contributions in their local community. Shed Chairman Iain McGhee was delighted to receive the QAVS crystal and certificate on behalf of the members and the Lord Lieutenant was treated to a guided tour of the Shed's Hamilton Street facilities. Two Shed members will now attend the garden party at Holyroodhouse in July 2023. Follow Dunoon Community Shed on [Facebook](#).

Kirkcaldy and District Men's Shed is officially open!

After months of renovation works at their new Ravenscraig Park base, the members of Kirkcaldy and District Men's Shed celebrated at their open day for members and non-members on Saturday 29th October 2022.

The open day showcased the refurbished facilities and what the Shed has to offer to the community as they held demonstrations of wood turning with John & Forrest, scroll work with Donald, pyrography with Janet and arts and crafts with Margaret. The Shed also displayed a wide range of projects completed by some of their current 25 members. Over £700 was raised for Shed funds by selling art, wood creations and raffle rickets at the event.



Shed Chairman Dave Stewart said: "We're offering opportunities for men in the Kirkcaldy area to meet and undertake creative, physical and purposeful activities of their choice. The members choose what they want to do.

"It's also about developing the capacity of men in the area to share their skills with others in the community. Although we will be focussed on craft projects and restoring the building for our use—we are about halfway through the refurbishment—the real essence of the Shed takes place not with tools in hand, but with cups of tea.

"Guys come in, the kettle gets put on, and we just sit and have a blether. The subjects range far and wide - it could be anything! I think most of the members enjoy that bit, just chatting away. They come in and it just starts".

Follow the Shed on [Facebook](#) for the latest updates.

Perth Men's Shed sponsors and installs outdoor learning experience for pupils

Rural Skills pupils at one of Scotland's newest secondary schools has benefitted from the installation of a polytunnel to enhance their outdoor learning experience thanks to Perth Men's Shed's Intergenerational Programme.

Adrian Harris from Perth Men's Shed said: "The Polyunnel Project at Bertha Park High School began as an idea floated about at a [Generations Working Together](#) meeting over two years ago.

"After exploring some avenues, Jim Thomson of Dupplin Estates unearthed an abandoned polytunnel frame buried in the undergrowth. He dug this out and it was in good condition and seemed to have most of the components required. The frame was cleaned up and replacement parts sourced then Jim kindly transported the frame a few miles along the road to Bertha Park and the project could begin.

"An 18 x 8m area was pegged out at the school and [Springfield Properties](#), who are still building homes in the area, offered a contractor to clear the site. The framework was then assembled and secured in a concrete base by our Shed members and 200 x 50mm wood battens installed to further secure the frame base."

The Shed approached [Scottish Woodlands Ltd](#) to ask for help to donate woodchip for the floor of the polytunnel and they were delighted to support this local community initiative with two trailer loads. MacGregor Scott, Senior Contracts Manager, in Scottish Woodlands Ltd Utilities team in Perth, said: "Anything that gets young people outside and helps them find out more about growing things, whether food or wood, is a great thing. There are so many exciting career opportunities in rural Scotland and giving young people hands-on experience to learn about those opportunities is crucial."

Adrian added: "Once the frame was erected and covered, it was great to see the pupils get involved helping us put down a bed of builders sand and heavy duty membrane before spreading out the wood chips over the entire area. The pupils also built four large planters using reclaimed pallets which they intend to use these during the winter months within the polytunnel as part of their programme.

"The project had valuable support from so many including Dupplin Estate - Forteviot, MGM Timber; Scottish Woodlands Ltd; and the Parent Teacher Association at Bertha Park. Steve Fulton of Perth Men's Shed oversaw the whole project from start to finish with assistance from Adrian Harris, Colin Hunter and Paul Creedican. Sandy Hay and Jim Neil were also coerced into helping when extra 'hands' were required.

"Now the Rural Skills pupils can work safe and dry in the adverse conditions that are upon us, preparing for their Spring planting."



Kirkmuirhill & Blackwood Men's Shed continue serving the needs of the community

Whether it is planting woodland trees, making bird and bat boxes, garden repairs or dressing up as an elf to make a child smile at Christmas, Kirkmuirhill & Blackwood Men's Shed (KBMS) is certainly making its presence known in their local community.

Shed Secretary Graham Stewart said: "KBMS members rate our involvement in community projects very highly. Not only do they help the community and local residents, but it also raises our profile and shows that the Shed is not just about woodworking—although that also plays an important part in our community involvement.

"Recently, on Saturday 19th November 2022, some of our members visited Loch Wood Community Woodland after being invited by Blackwood Estate Community Association (BECA) who manage Loch Wood, to plant some trees of various species, throughout the estate.

"We were lucky with the weather and an enjoyable experience was had by all who attended. This was the second such occasion we have been involved in tree planting on behalf of BECA. We also participated in their official opening ceremony when we provided bird and bat boxes. These activities fit in very nicely with our 'Active Shedders' projects whereby our members can partake in some healthy living activities. Our involvement in Walking Football and our Walking Tours have also proved a big hit with our members and more walking tours are planned for 2023.

"We continue to provide, wherever we can, various products to many local organisations including primary schools, early learning centres, community organisations, local businesses etc. Such products have included picnic benches, bird boxes, bird tables, planters (of all shapes and sizes), sand pits, mud kitchens, tree trunk stepping blocks, wood stores, to name but a few. Wherever possible we donate these free of charge but appreciate any form of donation—be it financial or even a packet of biscuits!

"We have also provided similar products and services to local residents (in return for a small donation) and have been known to make and fit garden gates, garden benches, planters, bird boxes etc. Our wood off-cuts and kindlers, which are free to uplift at the Shed, are also well received by local residents.

"On Saturday 10th December 2022, we hosted our third and ever-popular 'Breakfast with Santa' event which is a free event providing local children and their guardians with a light breakfast followed by a visit to Santa's Grotto and Workshop. The event was very well attended with very positive feedback from all attendees."

Visit KBMS's [Facebook](#) page for their latest news.



FESTIVE SHED PROJECTS

The Shedder elves have been busy in workshops across Scotland preparing TREE-mendous displays bringing festive cheer...

Ellon & District Men's Shed, who is offering up a warm space at the Shed every second Wednesday, has been making items including wooden snowmen, reindeer, baskets, signs, puzzles and ornaments to stock and sell at their local café, [Annie's Tearoom](#). The [Galashiels](#) elves have also been tinkering away on intricate items to sell on the high street!

[The Inverclyde Shed](#) entered their 'upcycled Christmas tree' made from driftwood into the Inverclyde Chamber of Commerce 'Festival of the Trees' fundraiser. The Shed invited the community to make their own bauble using found or up-cycled materials and objects like painted shells, beach glass or a beautiful bit of rubbish.

[Springburn Park, Lanark](#) and [Duns & District](#) Shedders have been busy constructing Santa sleighs for their communities. Springburn Park's sleigh was delivered to Robin House Children's Hospice at Balloch just in time for their Christmas Party last week. Lanark Men's Shed was commissioned by Tesco Lanark to create a sleigh. Chairman Alan Ross said: "We hope the sleigh

brings as much joy to many as it did to the guys making it."

Ewan Knox from Duns & District Men's Shed said: "We were approached by the Rotary Club of Duns to build a new Sleigh for Santa as the old sled had reached the end of its working life. Santa has expressed his delight to deliver presents to one and all in the new Sleigh. Engineers at the Shed utilised new technology to include a state-of-the-art satellite navigation system which allows Santa to find those girls and boys who have been good. In addition, the Sleigh is able to fly at warp speed with its improved propulsion system. Santa can now travel the world in less time than it takes to say Merry Christmas."

[Click here for a video of Duns & District Men's Shed's Santa sleigh.](#)

[Carse of Gowrie & District Men's Shed](#) had a stall at their local Christmas Fair at Blyth Hall in Newport-on-Tay where they had Shedder Derek's rocking horse on display and [Moffat Men's Shed](#) constructed and donated a new light switch for the big lights switch on in Moffat this year. ***There are just a small sample of the many creative projects that Scottish Sheddars have supported to give back to their communities this Christmas.***



Ellon



Gala



Inverclyde



Springburn Park



Duns & District



Lanark



Carse of Gowrie



Moffat

SHED PROJECTS

Nursery staff 'overwhelmed' by support from Springburn Park Shedders following blaze

Staff at the Hamiltonhill Family Learning Centre in Glasgow are 'overwhelmed' by the support shown from members of their community after their nursery garden was set on fire by callous vandals.

The garden had only recently received an upgrade with new planters, polytunnel, potting tables and artificial grass but was torched by last month by vandals causing extensive damage.

Springburn Park Men's Shed members stepped in—along with other community members and businesses—to lend a helping hand to make it safe for use once again.

Shed Chairman Tom Bennett said: "Our Shed runs an outdoor handyman service in the community. Our priority lies with supporting the older members of our community

and local schools and nurseries to help clear up areas for them to make it safe for all and keep it looking tidy.

"When we heard about this incident, we were sickened by this mindless act and knew we had to help the nursery. We cleared the area of debris to make it safe once again for the kids to get out and play.

"We have seen the community come together to support the centre. One local business has agreed to donate a new shed and one of the parents has agreed to repair the artificial grass area. There is still a lot of work to do to get it back to the way it was but we are getting there. Our Shedders will be going back to repaint the wall and metal fencing."

Head of the Centre Frances Stokes said: "What has been a very devastating and negative experience has actually turned into really positive goodwill gestures from our local community."

Follow Springburn Park Men's Shed's projects on [Facebook](#).



SHED PROJECTS

Remembrance Day Projects

Shedders across Scotland hand-crafted poppy-themed items to observe Armistice Day 2022, later known as Remembrance Day, on the 11th November to commemorate the end of the First World War in 1918 and honour the armed forces members that died during the conflict.



Pictured: Arbroath Men's Shed created this beautiful Remembrance Day tribute (left) whilst Banchory and District Men's Shed crafted wooden poppies (right) with half of the proceeds donated to the Legion Scotland Poppy Appeal.

LEST WE FORGET

Carse of Gowrie Men's Shed helps create hospital Covid tribute

[Carse of Gowrie Men's Shed](#) has created a display plinth for a permanent sculpture now in place at Ninewells Hospital in Dundee to mark Tayside's COVID-19 efforts.

The Shed was approached by the hospital and asked to design and build the beautiful wooden plinth to display an owl sculpture by artist Anthony Theakston.

Staff from the hospital's Intensive Care Unit (ICU) took part in a sponsored walk, cycle and swim event covering 2020 miles to mark Tayside's efforts during the pandemic. The funds raised then paid for the purchase of the owl sculpture which the artist created at no profit.

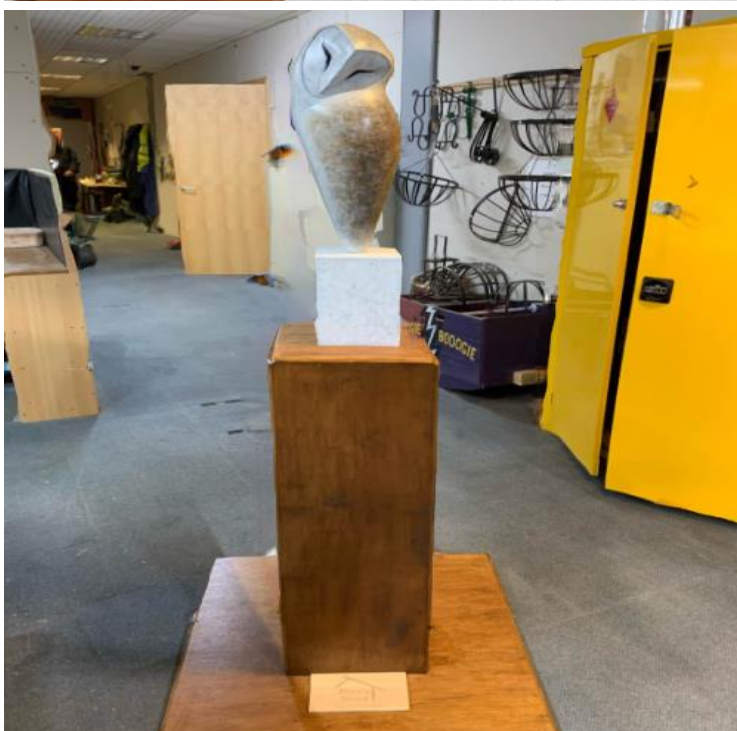
Staff member Joanne Leslie, who led the fundraising efforts, said: "We wanted to pay tribute to the people of Tayside and the hospital staff who were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We did some research and found that owls are often recognised as a symbol of seeing through the darkness, leading to new beginnings. We felt this suited our fight against COVID-19 perfectly.

"We would like to thank everyone who has helped us to reach our goal and we're absolutely delighted to see the sculpture now in place at Ninewells Hospital."

NHS Tayside Medical Director, Dr Pamela Johnston, said, "I am immensely proud of our ICU team for taking on this fundraising challenge.

"Our teams worked incredibly hard throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and this sculpture is a beautiful lasting tribute which can be enjoyed by staff, patients and visitors."



SHED PROJECTS

It's diversification all the way at Barrhead Men's Shed

Barrhead Men's Shed is not just offering the ever-popular bird boxes and planters traditionally on sale at Men's Sheds but has diversified its offering to bug huts, spurtles, magic wands, draught excluders, personalised engraved pens, mystical dragon kits, Christmas gnomes to build and paint, push-along penguins and llama planters... to name just a few!

The Shed, which is currently liaising with East Renfrewshire Council for a long-term lease for four industrial estate units to secure its future growth, covers its running costs through grants, donations, members' contributions and the sale of their wares. The Shed's 60+ active members are now offering a diverse range of quirky and extremely competitively-priced products which are becoming more and more popular in their community and being snapped up as soon as they are posted on their Facebook page.

Some of their products came about by accident however when Shedder Jim who originally started creating dinosaur planters discovered that his fellow Sheddies thought they looked more like llamas!

The Barrhead Sheddies have also been enjoying trying out new designs, materials and techniques as they get to grips with their latest piece of kit...a new laser engraving machine.

The £1,900 Red Dragon Laser machine requires access to a computer and the software, RDWorks v8, is supplied and compatible with Microsoft Windows. The Shed was also required to purchase a BOFA fume extraction unit and air filter.

The materials that can be engraved include acrylic, card, cork, glass, leather, paper, slate, wood and metal. The laser machine has not only allowed them to expand their product range but they have also created labels/badges for their work to stamp their name on them and raise awareness with the public.

Barrhead Men's Shed is open Monday to Friday from 10am-1pm. On a Thursday afternoon, 'The BUGS' (Barrhead Ukulele Group) practices at the Shed from 1-3pm. Follow the Shed on [Facebook](#).





WellBEing in the Woods

Did you know that spending time in the woods can support your wellbeing? A strong nature connection can benefit humans and nature in many ways. Taking time to slow down and connect with the world around us can be done anywhere and anytime.

As the seasons evolve, you might observe how one part of the tree's cycle may be releasing itself such as autumn leaves soaring and dancing to the ground while the buds are getting ready to burst forth come the following spring when the days lengthen, and the sun's rays are more vibrant.

If you like being outdoors or having a connection with nature, you might like to try forest bathing, or "wellBEing in the woods". Forest bathing is inspired by the Japanese practice of *shinrin yoku*, which was developed over 40 years ago in response to public health issues of an increasingly urbanised population. It is a chance to switch off from the 'world' wide web and connect into

the 'wood' wide web, and to change your pace for a short while.

Forest therapy, as guided by the Association of Nature (ANFT) encourages participants to deepen their relationship with the land and nature around them. As Jacques Cousteau noted, "people will only protect what they love." Part of the ANFT ethos is reciprocity with the land, and this can be done in many ways. It could be encouraging people to better appreciate nature through changing their perceptions, understanding the benefits of timber in construction as a product substitution for steel and concrete, altering shopping habits, tree planting or litter picking in your community.

The ANFT uses a framework to guide participants on a walk in nature to awaken your senses and give you space to make connections and slow down. Your guide works in partnership with the forest, which is the "therapist", while the guide opens the doors, hence each session will be unique to the participant and the day.

Physical, mental and emotional wellbeing can be supported with forest bathing so the practice can sit well within social prescribing. Research demonstrates evidence of the benefits of phytoncides, the natural aerosols of trees, in boosting wellbeing and immunity by encouraging the activity of 'natural killer' cells in the body. This can include lower stress levels, reduced blood pressure, feeling calmer and more peaceful.

In Scotland, there are a handful of Forest Therapy Guides trained and certified by the ANFT which has a global network of guides working in over 65 countries.

Jeannie Nairn, of Woodlands Breathing is based in West Lothian. After 20 years working in the forest industry, she currently offers a "wellBEing in the woods" experience, either as an in-person group or online. A live group event can take place in a woodland or park near your local Men's Shed.

Alternatively, if you are in a location with reasonable phone reception, an online experience could be a great way to connect with Shed members in different places. The walk is very gentle, suitable for most fitness levels and can be adapted for those who are less mobile. A full in-person walk is usually 2.5 - 3 hours long, walking around a mile, and less if it's online. Events can be one-off or a series, and can be combined with other activities like mindful photography or art.

If your Shed group would like to add a new tool to your wellbeing box, forest bathing might be an opportunity to explore your local woodland with new eyes.

You'll find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). Please get in touch at woodlandsbreathing@gmail.com to discuss how and when we can welcome you to your woods.

For more information, please visit www.woodlandsbreathing.co.uk



UNFORGOTTEN FORCES

Unforgotten Forces, an evolving partnership

The Unforgotten Forces partnership does not sit still in the support it offers older members of the ex-Armed Forces community. This year, we have welcomed two new charity partners—[Fighting with Pride](#) and [Blesma](#).

Fighting with Pride supports LGBT+ ex-service personnel, particularly those who experienced harsh treatment prior to 2000, when the Armed Forces ban on homosexuality in services was lifted.

Blesma, the limbless veterans, provides life-long support to veterans with limb loss, and for those who have lost use of a limb in a traumatic incident, regardless of whether this happened during or after military service.



Our existing partners are also endeavouring to work even more closely together. For instance, transport charity [Fares4Free](#) and [Defence Medical Welfare Services](#) are improving how they collaborate so they can better meet the needs of veterans who need both transport and one-to-one support for journeys to and from medical appointments.

You can keep up to date with these and other Unforgotten Forces developments in a variety of ways. The next issue of our free magazine is out in January 2023, with features on everything mentioned above, so now's a perfect time to join the mailing list. Visit www.unforgottenforces.scot to subscribe and for information about our partners and their services. On the website you can also sign up for a monthly email update, and we're active on Twitter [@UFForces](#) and on Facebook [@UnforgottenForces](#).

For a deeper understanding of issues that can affect older veterans, and of extra support available to them, you can join one of our free Zoom workshops in the new year. On the morning of Monday 16th January, we're running an introductory [Awareness of the Older Ex-Armed Forces Community](#) workshop. And on the morning of Monday 30th January our [Working in Partnership for Scotland's Older Veterans](#) workshop will help those already have that basic awareness to work more effectively with other charities and agencies to support older veterans. Just click on the links above for details and to book.



Doug Anthony
Veterans' Officer
Unforgotten Forces



UNFORGOTTEN FORCES

Supporting Scotland's Older Veterans

VETERANS' SUPPORT

Community Veterans Support

I met Jason Schroeder, SMSA CEO at a recent meeting of the [Armed Forces and Veteran Community Cross Party Group](#) in the Scottish Parliament.

In the to and fro of all things affecting the military veterans community it became clear during both the debate and in a follow-on conversation we had later that week that there is much that our military veterans and the Men's Shed movement share in common.

Two of the topics that were at the forefront of our minds during our conversation were men's health issues and also the current cost of living crisis, both of which had been hot topics at the Cross Party Group meeting. I'm going to return to these issues a little later but before I do let me explain who I am and what the organisation I am Director of does.

For ten years, [Community Veterans Support](#) has striven to support armed forces veterans, meeting them at their point of need. Originally established to assist veterans through the transition from military to civilian life it has grown into a diverse, five day a week drop in and support centre. The centre offers veterans a free hot lunch, emergency accommodation if homeless, emergency food boxes, a safe space and something like the kind of mutual support and camaraderie they enjoyed whilst in uniform.

It also provides employment support, interview clothing when required, financial/emergency welfare payments and signposts veterans to a wide range of support services. We also provide a range of activities for our veterans to participate in including a weekly quiz, film night, pool and darts competition along with nutritional advice and how to cook on a budget. We regularly arrange a choice of outings to places of interest and over the years have organised hill walks, horse riding and sailing along with summer barbecues and themed lunches. We also provide support and transport to bring outlying veterans to the Centre.

Okay, so we don't build stuff but the kinds of activities and more importantly conversations our veterans are having over coffee and biscuits or a hot lunch on any given day will be all too familiar to any 'Shedder'.

So, an ongoing conversation for me and my team is veterans, predominantly male veterans' health. I remember the advertising campaign here in Scotland a few years back concerning prostate cancer and the fact that men are historically reluctant to go and see their GP. The billboard advert stated that "1,000 men in Scotland will die of ignorance this year..." Someone had spray painted over it "Naw we'll no..."

Veterans and their health are generally no different from the communities they exist within and we all now know that since the pandemic lockdowns, mental ill health and wellbeing are front and centre. As part of our veteran registration process we ask if each individual has any outstanding health issues we should be aware of and we



ask that so we can better tailor the kinds of support we can offer to them individually. What I believe the Men's Shed Movement and our own drop in centre have in common is the possibility of allowing every individual a welcoming and safe place just to sit together and chat. It is difficult I think to underestimate the power of a shared conversation and the value of someone who is happy to take the time to actively listen to another person. Unlike the old song, we don't need to 'pack up our troubles in our old kit bag and smile...' Nowadays we're more inclined to say 'pull up a sandbag mucker, grab a cup of tea and let's chat...'.

The other topic at the forefront of all of our minds is the current cost of living crisis. As a veterans charity our first responsibility is to our veteran community. In order to continue to fight fuel poverty we have just installed a clothes washing machine and drier so that any veteran can make a saving on his or her utilities by booking a time to do their washing here in the Centre. We also have an emergency pantry where any veteran who needs it can get an emergency food and essentials parcel. In its essence, the centre automatically acts as a 'warm hub' where there is hot refreshments, hot food, entertainments, Wi-Fi and company and this is another area where the veteran and MS movement share a common experience.

Next month, we intend to offer one evening in the centre as a warm space with all of the above facilities to our own local community here in Govan. I believe this is important as we are a distinct, small community with its own unique and well defined sense of community within a wider local community and we want to reach out and offer what we are able as we all face significant challenges this winter.

We are keen to support the Men's Shed Movement where we can and I hope there may be opportunities in the future where there might be some kind of crossover as I know that there are some veterans, including one of our own, who are enthusiastic Sheddors.

In the meantime, let me take this opportunity to wish all of you Sheddors and the Men's Shed Movement every best wish this Christmas and in 2023.

David Devenney
Director, Community Veterans Support
www.communityveteranssupport.org

Why not grab some fellow Shedders to try this **Literary Quiz** together, kindly shared by Dunfermline Men's Shed!

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Slip in the long grass | 18. The tale about Bruce when he replaced Hungarian leader with English one |
| 2. Soldier dies in explosion, and can't be found | 19. The tool to draw on the press |
| 3. Son of Bethany, for short | 20. The winner from Hungary gains fifty percent of gold |
| 4. Sweet! | 21. They go like the clappers |
| 5. Tallest Welsh land well now dismantled | 22. Top award for the ring bearer |
| 6. Tchaikovsky or Gagarin | 23. Trap two little ducks |
| 7. Tellurium is spotted in them it's very annoying | 24. Tumbled over in a World line-dance |
| 8. The actor is allowed to play this famous role | 25. Two thousand work in the Environment Agency |
| 9. The answer to this one is entirely your choice | 26. Type of Indian from the Americas |
| 10. The bit around a male ferret | 27. Vehicle, it knocked fairy over |
| 11. The cobbler's tool from broken hot machines | 28. Walk around what certainly is an endless lane |
| 12. The first fox, the first alligator, the first rabbit and the first mink | 29. We hear she balances pints whilst playing snooker |
| 13. The French sea song from part of Italy | 30. When you have 8 points in your pockets |
| 14. The lion lost broken toy | 31. Wiring of Viola is broken |
| 15. The same man is at either end of a knot | 32. Yes, thy odes are edited |
| 16. The smart circus man broke up the lion's den | 33. You can have sly uses for this answer |
| 17. The Stig and Alfred are hiding this magical character | |

Can you match the question to one of the answers below?

Answers shown in alphabetical order. [Click here for the answers.](#)

A Taste of Honey

Alice in Wonderland

All's Well that ends well

Animal Farm

As you like it

Beatrix Potter

Billy Liar

Brave New World

Catch 22

Emma

From Russia with love

Gandalf

Gold Finger

Hamlet

Jerome K Jerome

Leo Tolstoy

Macbeth

Paradise Lost

The Catcher in the Rye

The Chimes

The Forsyte Saga

The Hobbit

The Last of the Mohicans

The Merchant of Venice

The Odyssey

The Pickwick Papers

The Red and the Black

The Tempest

Treasure Island

Ulysses

Vanity Fair

Victor Hugo

Virginia Woolf

WHAT'S COOKING?

The SMSA's 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' 2022 awards sponsor and leading premium Scottish Shortbread maker, [Dean's of Huntly](#), in conjunction with Angie Milne of [The Wee Larder](#) share a very special 'melt in the mouth' recipe with The Scottish Shedder readers.

The SMSA had the pleasure of being invited to their purpose-built bakery on the outskirts of Huntly to watch, and take in the aroma of, their light and crumbly shortbread being handcrafted by their factory team.

Angie Milne from The Wee Larder said: "This creamy cheesecake swirled with fresh blackberry sauce is baked on top of a lovely buttery shortbread base using the traditional Scottish shortbread fingers from Dean's. This is a perfect weekend recipe."

Ingredients:

- 300g Dean's Shortbread Fingers (2 packs)
- 115g Melted Butter
- 250g Blackberries
- 1/2 Lemon Juiced
- 175g Caster Sugar
- 600g Full Fat Soft Cheese
- 3 Large Eggs plus 2 Egg Yolks
- 175g Double Cream
- 1tbsp Vanilla Bean Paste

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 160C and grease up a medium sized cake tin (approx. 7inches).
2. Crush the shortbread fingers with a rolling pin. Add in the melted butter and pack into a greased cake tin. Leave to cool in the fridge.
3. Add the blackberries, lemon juice and caster sugar into a small pan and melt down until the sugar is combined (approx. 5 mins on a medium heat). Mash with a potato masher. Set aside to cool.
4. Combine the full fat soft cheese, 3 eggs and 2 egg yolks with the double cream and vanilla. Mix together well and pour into the cake tin with the chilled shortbread base. Swirl approx. half of the blackberry mixture on the top of the cheesecake and swirl through with a pin or a fork to create a nice pattern.
5. Bake the cheesecake in the oven for approx. 1hr 15-30minutes. It should still be slightly wobbly on the top. Leave to cool completely on the counter before popping in the fridge to completely set.
6. Top with the remaining blackberry sauce and additional blackberries if you wish. Serve in slices with cream or on its own. Enjoy!

Dean's has been baking traditional Scottish Shortbread in Huntly since 1975. Check out their [website](#) to view their traditional shortbread packs, boxes and Christmas hampers.

Blackberry Shortbread Cheesecake



The SMSA acknowledges and express our sincere thanks to our partners and funders for their support in 2022 for the development and growth of the Men's Shed Movement in Scotland:



Support the SMSA

Want to help make a difference? There are many ways to support the Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) and our vital work.

Make a direct donation to the Association:



Donate while you shop online, at no extra cost to yourself:



Fundraising and social media events

You can raise funds for the SMSA through fundraising and social media events like Facebook Birthday Fundraisers!

Legacy donation

Become a guardian for future generations of Shedders by leaving a gift in your will to the Association. Start a conversation with the SMSA to discuss the difference this could make

The SMSA is a registered Scottish charity (SC045139), its Board of Trustees—all volunteers that receive no remuneration for their time and efforts—passionately believe in the SMSA's aims and vision for the people of Scotland. The Association's small staff team of passionate individuals work to promote and support the growth of the grassroots movement across Scotland. From speaking to hundreds of individuals requiring support to start their own Men's Shed; creating pathways and documentation specific to Scottish law; and lobbying policymakers on men's health and wellbeing.

Follow the SMSA at

