

# THE SCOTTISH SHEDDER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE

SCOTTISH  
MEN'S SHEDS  
ASSOCIATION

**Pictured:** Trophy handover at Aberchirder & District Men's Shed (aka Foggie Men's Shed) on the 24th September. ADMS received the replica trophy (created by David Young Training) from SMSA to forever recognise them as inaugural winners of the Scottish 'Men's Shed of the Year' 2019. The winners' trophy will now be handed over to the 2020 winner—The Inverclyde Shed.

## WHAT'S INSIDE?

- 2 TALKING SHEDS
- 3 SMSA NEWS
- 4 SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT
- 6 SHED LIFE
- 13 LETTERS TO EDITOR
- 14 A PERSONAL STORY
- 16 SHED PROJECTS
- 17 SHED QUIZ
- 18 HEALTH MATTERS
- 20 WHAT'S COOKING?
- 21 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
- 22 UPDATE FROM AGE SCOTLAND
- 23 WHAT'S ON?

## What are your Shed's Christmas Plans?

SMSA wants to hear how your Shed plans to celebrate the festive season! Are you having a virtual Christmas party/meal? Christmas jumper meeting on Zoom? Organising shopping deliveries for vulnerable members of your community? Christmas-themed quiz night? Are any of your Sheddors dressing up as Santa for online community events?

Let us know at [comms@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:comms@scottishmsa.org.uk) (and send us your photos) and we will promote it in the December issue of The Scottish Shedder.

## \*\*\*DATE FOR YOUR DIARY\*\*\*

### SMSA National Shed Zoom Meeting

Thursday 21st January 2021  
10am—1pm (estimated finish time)

Following on from the last National Shed Network meeting, the purpose of this event is to hear from Scottish Men's Sheds on the last few months—in relation to Covid-19 and temporary Shed closures—and the situation going forward in 2021

Register today at

[www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ShedNetworkJan2021](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ShedNetworkJan2021)

## THE SCOTTISH SHEDDER

The Scottish Shedder promotes news from the Men's Sheds around Scotland to showcase their successes in addition to promoting relevant events, funding opportunities, DIY projects, recipes and much more.

Each issue is sent digitally to over 2,400 Individual Member subscribers.

We want to hear all about your Shed, its latest developments and exciting projects and are therefore asking for your contributions for the next issue by Friday 4th December 2020. We urge you to maximise the potential to raise the profile of your Shed and the Men's Sheds Movement in Scotland.

Email: [comms@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:comms@scottishmsa.org.uk)

# TALKING SHEDS

by Jason Schroeder

Greetings on a cold early November afternoon with both wood burners puffing away at my house on the hill! This is the new normal for me, working from home, and we scurry along up to Christmas and year end. Did I just say year end? Now, how did that happen?

We continue to remain very busy supporting new Sheds opening, developing Sheds moving along and trying to save Sheds from closing. We are looking at new initiatives to keep Sheds open and strategies for distanced socialising—particularly for those who do not use Zoom or other technology to speak to their mates—as we move into the most isolating time of the year. For many, who have been meeting for a blether in each others' gardens across Scotland, this is now becoming not so enjoyable in the winter months.

Thank you to the many who responded to my recent call out for our cancer research project funded by Macmillan Cancer Support (see page 18). We have been overwhelmed by the response and if there are any more men out there that want to join our merry band of trailblazers, please do get in touch with me at [ceo@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:ceo@scottishmsa.org.uk).

We have just taken receipt of the new **Pathfinder Safe Distancing Assistant** equipment (pictured right) which was funded by our partnership with the **Scottish Community**



**Alliance** (SCA). We will trial this in a few Sheds who have signed up for it and keep you all updated. Also through the SCA, the **Community Learning Exchange** (funding to visit and learn from other Sheds) is currently closed but you can still apply for the one-year costs of Zoom hosting for your Shed to keep you connected—without the 40-minute cut off time. Please be aware that this is for SMSA Member Sheds, so if your Shed has not joined us yet—which is free until 31st March 2021—please join today at [www.scottishmsa.org.uk/shed-membership-application](http://www.scottishmsa.org.uk/shed-membership-application)

If your Shed is closed—and you don't have tools/equipment or buildings and you are not meeting or carrying out any activities at all—then you can cancel your insurance for now if you are with our insurance partner **Greenwood Moreland**. Drop Elaine an email at [elaine@greenwoodmoreland.co.uk](mailto:elaine@greenwoodmoreland.co.uk) or call her on 07954 700278. Because they understand the struggles you are having with low or no income, and are passionate about Men's Sheds. They are here to help keep you safe and sustainable. Now, that's what we call a partnership!

We are sad to see our Secretary, Chris Oliver, resign after a short period in office—due to health reasons—and we hope he makes a speedy recovery. We want to thank him for his valuable input in moving us forward particularly in the health arena.

I am looking forward to connecting with you all on our National Zoom meeting on the 21st January 2021—remember to register your place at [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ShedNetworkJan2021](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ShedNetworkJan2021)

**Jason Schroeder**  
SMSA Executive Officer

## Call for an SMSA Highland and Islands Representative

SMSA is on the lookout for a new Trustee to represent the Highlands and Islands region to ensure Scotland-wide representation and contribute to its ambitious growth and development plans.

If you are in this region and are passionate about Men's Sheds, the SMSA would love to hear from you and what you could bring to this key role. Contact **Jason Schroeder**.

## Legionella risks during the Coronavirus pandemic

Recent cases of Legionnaires' disease in the Midlands are a powerful reminder of the duty to identify and control risks associated with legionella.

With Shed's closed and reduced occupancy during the pandemic, water system stagnation can occur—due to lack of use—increasing the risks of Legionnaires' disease.

Men's Shed's should review their **risk assessment** and manage the legionella risks when you:

- reinstate a water system or start using it again
- restart some types of **air conditioning units**

If the water system is still used regularly, maintain the appropriate measures to prevent legionella growth.

For detailed guidance on managing the risks of Legionnaires' disease during the pandemic, visit the **HSE website**.

## Men's Shed 'Covid-19 Poster Resource Pack'

SMSA has revised its **Covid-19 poster resource pack** for Men's Sheds in Scotland. Whilst the Association is still advising Men's Sheds to remain closed in Phase 3, the pack—currently containing 29 posters with colour or white background options—will allow Sheds to print off and prominently display the posters that they require for their Shed premises to prepare in advance.

The SMSA is in ongoing discussions with the Scottish Government regarding the closure of Sheds and the health and safety of Sheddors during the pandemic. SMSA is currently working on the guidance (including risk assessments) for Sheds which will be issued at the appropriate time in line with Scottish Government guidance.

**If you have suggestions for more posters required at your Shed premises, please contact **Michelle Wibrew, SMSA's Communication Officer**, and the pack will be revised for all.**







**Michelle Wibrew**  
SMSA Communications  
& PR Officer

## Meet SMSA's Communications & PR Officer

Without giving away her age, SMSA's Communications and PR Officer Michelle Wibrew has worked in the third sector for over 20 years!

Her experience includes working with the local and national media, press release writing, newsletters, website design, promotional materials, making the most of social media and event management.

Michelle joined the SMSA team in September 2019 and quickly got to work to relaunch and revamp **The Scottish Shedder** newsletter in just three weeks and over time, it has grown and developed to meet the needs of its readers.

Michelle said: "Put simply, it is my job to promote your Shed and the Movement. Each issue, I feature a 'Shed in the Spotlight' and a Shedder's 'Personal Journey' in depth but I also want to hear about any Shed updates.

"I often hear in passing conversations that people didn't get in touch as they didn't think their story was newsworthy enough and often find that, once we have had a wee chat, it really is!"

"If I don't know about it then I can't promote it, so drop me an email or give me a call. We want to hear the good news from your Shed: new premises; Community Asset Transfers; latest funding awards; and your projects, activities and initiatives but we also know that Shed life doesn't come without its pressures so we also want to highlight the challenges you faced and how you overcame them.

"Visits to Sheds are not possible at the moment, but an informal chat can take place over the phone before I draft up your article to go through the necessary approval process at your Shed. You will have plenty of time to make any changes before the issue date.

"Through sharing this information, we can truly showcase the Men's Sheds Movement to funders, partners, the media but more importantly, reach more men in our communities and learn from each other without reinventing the wheel! So, what have you got to lose? It is free to share your story through the SMSA and I am always on the lookout for stories and leads!"

SMSA has a mailing list of over 2,400 subscribers that support the Men's Sheds Movement in Scotland and this is an opportunity to really showcase your Shed.

Have a story that you wish to share with the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement? Email [Michelle Wibrew](mailto:Michelle.Wibrew@scottishmsa.org.uk), SMSA's Communication Officer, or call her on 07389061498 (Monday to Thursday) to discuss.

Figures as at 31st October 2020



**130**

SMSA SHED MEMBERS

**2,420**

SMSA INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS



**133**

OPEN SHEDS

**56**

SHEDS IN DEVELOPMENT



**32**

LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS

## Welcome to our three new SMSA Shed Members!

**Forth Bridges Men's Shed**

**Kirriemuir and Glens Men's Shed**

**Maryburgh Men's Shed**

# SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT



***The Scottish Shedder finds out more about the revamp of Cullen Men's Shed (CMS) and how one of its Shedders has returned to the building he first found a passion for woodwork and metalwork as a school pupil.***

CMS member, Stan Slater, said: "Our Shed is in the old Cullen School technical building where I first encountered woodwork and metalwork at school in the late 1960's. I have now done full circle and returned to breathe new life into the place where my education started. I wonder how many can say that?"

The Shed is located within the Cullen Community Centre and the whole building was rescued from closure two years ago by the Three Kings Cullen Association which Stan is also a director of.

The Association was formed in 2018 after the building (which had previously been boarded up for ten years) faced closure—due to Moray Council budgets cuts. The Association—which is both a Community Development Trust and a registered Scottish charity owned by local people— took over the building (which is also a residential centre for 32 children and six adults) in September 2018 to host sports groups, arts and crafts, coffee mornings, language classes, cinema screenings and the men's shed.

The building is now undergoing a significant refurb in the hope it can become a place for more members of the local community to come together and learn new skills.

Stan added: "In September 2020, we received the fantastic news that Moray Council had agreed to sell the building to the Three Kings Cullen Association for £35,000.

"This unanimous decision was made following praise given to our volunteers for the improvements that they had made to the facility while leasing it.

"Community volunteers got to work on the next leg of the journey to start the overhaul of the Shed premises. We had a schedule for when volunteers could work on the project whilst adhering to all social distancing measures (check out CMS's [time lapse videos](#) on their website).

"We secured funds from several key funders including the National Lottery Community Fund and the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust to start transforming the space into an impressive social area with log burner, kitchen facilities, fully accessible toilets and a workshop for our Sheddies. It is hoped that this work will be completed by the end of the year.

"There have been quite a few jobs, as part of the refurbishment, that we had initially thought would take much longer with the restrictions in place. For instance, the new beams that we anticipated taking a whole week to do, took just three hours! The work is being carried out safely with just a few members—all following strict social distancing rules—and it is really coming together. We are delighted with the progress made in such a short space of time.

"We, of course, miss the days of being together in the Shed every Wednesday evening working on projects like mud kitchens for local playgroups and planter movers and hearing talks on a range of interesting subjects (from bee keeping to deep sea diving!) but what we are doing now is preparing for our return one day.



**Pictured (top to bottom):** building the internal walls and installing electrics; Stan Slater (pictured on the right) with his fellow Sheddies before lockdown; the Shed space before the refurb began; and the pointing repair of the outside wall

*...continued on next page*



# SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT (Continued)



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"As of October 2020, the outside wall has been repaired, the new log burner (pictured right) and electrics are installed, insulation is in and the plasterboard is up on the walls and ceilings. New LED lights, the internal doors and windows have all been ordered and we are awaiting delivery. We are indebted to our volunteers for their hard work and effort—they have made such amazing progress.

"During the pandemic, our members have been keeping in touch through a Whatsapp group to keep us connected. For our more vulnerable members we have been keeping in touch by phone to keep them updated with the developments at the Shed."

So, what are the future plans for Cullen Men's Shed? Stan said: "We are planning to welcome groups back to the centre gradually when it is permitted to do so. It is hoped to operate the building seven days a week to community benefit.

"We want this to become a place where people of all ages can come along to make friends and learn new

skills. We have plans to encourage more young people to attend doing activities like making go karts from old pram wheels like the good old days.

"Our Shed has a music group (pictured below left) and we also intend to purchase a computer numerical control (CNC) machine to offer more activities to attract a wider demographic along to the Shed and the Centre. It is great to provide a blend of new and old techniques and technologies for intergenerational working and mentoring.

"Cullen is famed for its Cullen Skink (a Scottish soup made of smoked haddock, potatoes and onions) and we are passionate about this heritage and one of our plans is to build a smoke house to smoke our own fish! Another area that our Sheddors may diversify into is making beautiful and unique resin tables which are becoming very popular at the moment and would generate more income for the Shed.

"Cullen is also set to become part of the Moray Ecovillage Development project—to become more socially, culturally, economically, and/or ecologically sustainable to regenerate natural environments—so there are ambitious plans afoot for not just the region but also for the Shed. Watch this space!"

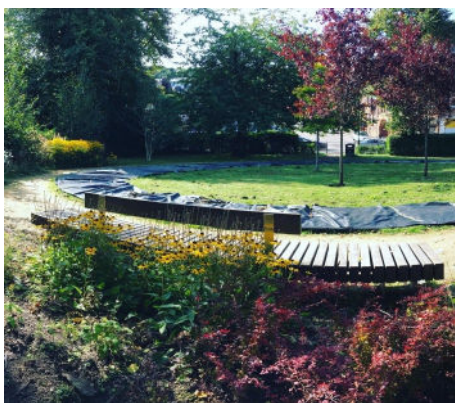
**For more information on Cullen Men's Shed, follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/groups/699574667245336](https://www.facebook.com/groups/699574667245336) or visit their website at [www.cullenmensshed.org.uk](http://www.cullenmensshed.org.uk)**



**Pictured (top to bottom):** CMS today with the plasterboard up on the walls and ceilings; the before and after of the log burner installation; insulation completed; and the plasterboard project is complete

**Pictured left:** the CMS music group before lockdown





## Inverclyde's 'When the Wind Blows' project blooms

The Inverclyde Shed is working on a very special project to celebrate and remember people who have passed as part of the Absent Friends Festival 2020.

The project, called 'When the Wind Blows', is a very special project in partnership with Pallative Care Scotland and will take place at the George Wyllie Memorial Garden next to The Inverclyde Shed's Shore Street Community Garden this month.

The Absent Friends festival is taking place in communities across Scotland from the 1st-7th November 2020 in public spaces, over social media, among friends, families and communities, and in people's minds and hearts.

Bruce Newlands, Chair of the Scottish 'Men's Shed of the Year' 2020—The Inverclyde Shed, said: "We describe the project by two names - 'Flowers of the Forest' and 'When the Wind Blows.' The idea is to plant a wildflower meadow in a circle, sowed in cups of seeds by people in

individual acts of remembrance but collectively to commemorate loved ones that have passed.

"The meadow is located in a sheltered, quiet, contemplative memorial garden space with purpose-built benches and path. Wind chimes and birdboxes will also be installed in the surrounding trees to add a sense of calm and tranquillity to the area. White poppies will feature prominently in the meadow when it flowers next spring. These individual acts of commemoration will cumulatively leave a lasting colourful remembrance for generations to come.

"Our Shed is proud to be involved in this project, to not only improve this space but to also offer a place of reflection to improve the health and wellbeing of people in our community."

The sowing event will take place during the Pallative Care Scotland's 'Absent Friends Festival of Remembrance' (1st—7th November 2020).

**For more information on The Inverclyde Shed, please visit [www.inverclydeshed.co.uk](http://www.inverclydeshed.co.uk) or follow them on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn).**

## Dingwall Men's Shed comes one step closer to dream 'home'

Members of Dingwall and District Men's Shed (DDMS) welcomed the arrival of two portacabins and a container to create their new home at a former skate park at Jubilee Park last month.

DDMS, formed in 2017, initially opened its Shed doors at a 'pod' at Ross County Football Club's Community Hub grounds twice a week but the Sheddors quickly outgrew the space and have been working tirelessly to secure their new permanent home.

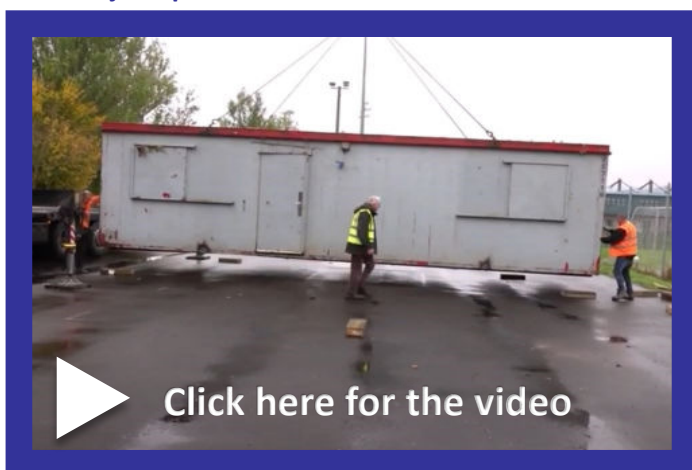
In September 2019, DDMS acquired a 30-year lease from The Highland Council on the disused Dingwall skate park. On securing the large site—extending to 760 square metres—DDMS wanted to transform the site to serve, not just the Shed, but as a community asset. The Shed acquired planning permission for a polytunnel, a craft village and a landscaped area to attract local wildlife—widening the area for use by the whole community.

DDMS has not let the pandemic curtail efforts and has been raising vital funds to realise their dream and install several buildings to be converted into space for activities to take place including woodwork, metalwork,

photography, horticulture, arts and crafts and a social area once lockdown restrictions ease.

One of the storage containers was also gifted by Ross County FC to store the group's equipment and tools for its various projects. Watch the video (below) of the containers arriving on site ready to be called home!

Keep up-to-date with DDMS's activities on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/Dingwalldistrictmensshed](https://www.facebook.com/Dingwalldistrictmensshed). If you are interested in joining the Shed, please contact Secretary Steve Dovey on 01997 423209 or email him at [steve@sjd32.plus.com](mailto:steve@sjd32.plus.com)



**Click here for the video**





## Roslin Men's Shed selected as litter purging task force for Midlothian

Roslin Men's Shed has been selected as a new litter hub for Midlothian. Environmental charity, Keep Scotland Beautiful has created 11 litter picking hubs across Scotland—providing free litter picking equipment to support communities to tackle local litter issues.

The eleven community groups chosen are the first round of groups to become litter pick hubs in Scotland, with more following in the future. By creating the hubs, Keep Scotland Beautiful is looking to empower communities who are frustrated by litter worsening during, and following the easing of, lockdown.

Roslin Men's Shed has taken delivery of the 'Helping Hands' litter purging equipment and will make these available for individual volunteers and groups to borrow (following strict social distancing and safety measures).

Jim Hiddleston of Roslin Men's Shed said: "We are delighted to have been chosen as Midlothian's Local Litter Picking Hub. Our Shed has been actively involved in many village clean-ups over the years, supported by local residents, and we are proud to be involved in this initiative."

The funding for the litter kits has been provided by Coca-Cola, and will see kits containing enough litter pickers, gloves, bag hoops and hi-vis vests for up to ten people to take part in a litter pick at a time. Groups will also be able to access posters and social media content to help encourage people to look after their local places and keep Scotland beautiful.

Since lockdown restrictions have begun to ease, litter has become a more noticeable problem. Keep Scotland Beautiful research shows that 30% of people think that litter has got worse in their local area during lockdown. These kits will allow locals concerned by the issue in their area to tackle the problem.

Heather McLaughlin, Campaigns Officer at Keep Scotland Beautiful said: "During lockdown, many of us spent time enjoying our local parks and green spaces. Lockdown showed us how important these areas are to our health and well-being. Unfortunately, a minority of people have behaved in an irresponsible and selfish manner, dropping their rubbish, leaving it for others to clean up and spoiling our beautiful country."

"These kits will help people to tackle litter in the areas they care about. We encourage anyone who lives near one of these kits to make use of them."

Lisa Foster, Sustainable Packaging Manager, Coca-Cola European Partners, said: "We're proud to be supporting the campaign for another year. The aim isn't just to get people to pick up litter and look after public places; it's about changing behaviour for the better, encouraging recycling, instilling a sense of local pride and inspiring future generations."

"Local parks and greenspace are so important to communities across the country, and while this year's clean-up activity may look different to previous years with the absence of large-scale litter picks, the message remains the same – our outdoor spaces need to be preserved and protected."

For more information on Roslin Men's Shed and its activities, follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/pg/RoslinMensShed](https://www.facebook.com/pg/RoslinMensShed)

## Litter Picking Hubs (11) Across Scotland

**Friockheim Park Community Volunteers, Angus**  
**Bute Wombles, Argyll and Bute**  
**Tamfourhill Community Hub, Falkirk**  
**CLEAR Buckhaven & Methil, Fife**  
**Yorkhill Green Spaces, Glasgow City**  
**Nevis Partnership, Highland**  
**Roslin Men Shed, Midlothian**  
**West Kilbride Civic Society, North Ayrshire**  
**Erskine Community Garden, Renfrewshire**  
**Sea the Change, Scottish Borders**  
**Riverside Community Council, Stirling**



**Pictured:** Top image—Roslin villagers carry out a litter purge just before lockdown; and right—Robert Clark, Stewart McLean and George Newlands of Roslin Men's Shed get to work with the new litter picking equipment



## Co-operate initiative provides new online platform for Forres & District Men's Shed

Forres & District Men's Shed was pleasantly surprised to discover that Co-operate—an online platform to bring communities together—had supplied them with a webpage to promote their services.

The webpage—<https://co-operate.coop.co.uk/groups/forres-and-district-mens-shed>—is a much-welcomed addition to the Shed's promotional channels to ensure they reach more men within their locality.

Co-operate is an online resource for members of the community to learn more about the groups and services on offer in their area and afford the opportunity to connect and join forces. It helps communities give or receive support; find local activities; volunteer safely and read inspirational stories.

The website is managed by Co-operate's small team in partnership with the community. A Co-op spokesperson said: "Our mission is to help people make good things happen in communities and



encourage people to make a difference where they live. We aim to create opportunities that make it easier for people to come together and change their communities for the better."

David Parker, Secretary of Forres & District Men's Shed, said: "We applied to the Co-op for a grant and were delighted to see this webpage, to promote our Shed offering, also come as a result of that. At the end of October, we were informed that our application was successful and our Shed is now in this round of the Co-op Local Community Fund that will run for 12 months until the 23rd October 2021.

"I know the Co-op does a lot of great work for many Sheds across Scotland and we are delighted to expand our relationship with them.

**Other Sheds can add their details on the Co-operate website at:**

<https://co-operate.coop.co.uk/add-your-activity-or-group>

### About Forres & District Men's Shed

The main aim of the Shed is to advance the social needs and improve the health and well being of men. The Shed has been running for over six years, has 30 active members and welcomes any new members aged 18 or over living in the Forres Academy catchment area.

The Shed has recently moved to a new location at Greenbank Workshop in Mundole. Although the Shed is currently closed, due to Covid-19, it usually runs five days a week from 10am to 1pm.

The Shed's members have been really missing the interaction and have been keeping in touch via messenger and video chats on usual Shed days. The members who can work from home have also been busy in their own Sheds making new projects to continue to raise funds for the Shed.

For more information on Forres & District Men's Shed, visit their [Co-operate webpage](#) and follow them on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).



**Pictured:** Members of the Forres & District Men's Shed selling wares at Forres Town Hall to raise funds for the Shed before lockdown.





## The Ecology Centre's Tool Shed – Covid-19 won't stop Malawi Tool Shipment!

Thanks to the hard work and support of volunteers at The Ecology Centre and The Rotary Club of Cowdenbeath, Covid-19 will not stop life-changing refurbished tools going to those that need them in Malawi, East Africa this year!

After being closed for over six months due to the pandemic, The Ecology Centre got its Tool Shed volunteering programme up and running again back in August and are working around the clock to get their biggest shipment of tools to date ready.

Covid-19 has created many challenges for this year's tool shipment, with many of the other tool refurbishment sites unable to complete their allocations due to lack of volunteer resources.

Tool Shed Officer, Lee Brown, said: "Previously we would have shipped six kits, however our volunteers have been desperate to keep busy, get back to it and are working hard to produce a record 14 kits, whilst also provisioning for a further six should they be needed.

"To enable us to reach this target we have been very grateful for the support of The Rotary Club of Cowdenbeath in helping us to collect old, unwanted and used tools. Without these donations and the donations we've received from members of the public we couldn't produce these kits. We're fortunate to have such a dedicated group of volunteers who are working hard to transform all these rusty tools!"

Tom Russell from The Rotary Club of Cowdenbeath said: "The Tool Shed's operation and objectives embrace so many of the aims of the Rotary ideals and projects – like endowing and empowering individuals and communities with the means to develop and improve their quality of life, both at international and local community levels.

"The exponential benefits to everyone involved are evident and conducive to skills development, social goodwill and good health, as well as the environmental element of the Tool Shed's work."

"Rotary clubs recognise the importance of sustainable support and continuity for such projects and commend the willingness of our local communities and public for their generous support."

The Tool Shed has a dedicated team of 16 volunteers, including some that have committed in excess of 1,000 hours to get this shipment ready.

Tools are donated by the public, refurbished and are then donated via charitable partners - [Tools for Self Reliance](#) and the Scottish based [Global Concerns Trust](#).

The team has worked closely with The Global Concerns Trust over many years and have sent a variety of tools and Singer sewing machines to those disadvantaged by physical disabilities in Malawi.

Through their in-country training partners, trainees receive work based skills training, in either carpentry, cane furniture making and tailoring. Each year, The Global Concerns Trust ships over 1,000 woodworking tools and 32 manual Singer sewing machines and treadles to Malawi allowing for the training to take place.

This programme is only possible by having a constant supply of donations of old, unwanted and used carpentry tools, which the team are always looking for. They also accept donations of old and unwanted garden tools too as they are the prime focus for their Thursday dementia friendly volunteering Tool Shed sessions. These tools are refurbished and made available to local community groups.

If you've had a lockdown shed or garage clear out and have any kind of tools that you would like to donate, please contact Lee Brown via email at [Toolshed@theecologycentre.org](mailto:Toolshed@theecologycentre.org) to discuss collection.

For more information about The Ecology Centre, follow them on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram or visit [www.theecologycentre.org](http://www.theecologycentre.org)

**Pictured above (left to right):** Ken Littlemore (Tool Shed volunteer), Lee Brown (Tool Shed Officer), Bob Smith (Tool Shed volunteer) and Tom Russell (The Rotary Club of Cowdenbeath)





## Kennoway Community Shed's Allotment Project branches out

The plot has thickened for Kennoway Community Shed with the transformation, in seven short months, of an old bowling green and surrounding area (pictured above left) into an impressive tranquil space for their Shed, a sensory garden, 15 allotments and eight raised beds for the local school.

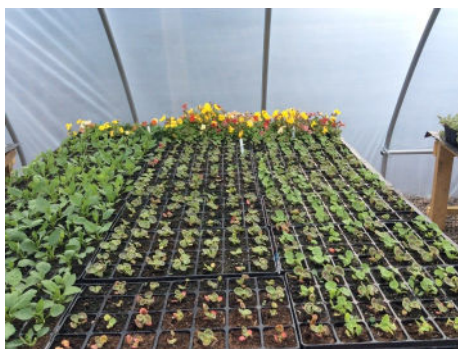
With the support of Fife Council, the Kennoway Shedders have installed a 20-metre polytunnel to grow vegetables for the local community. The green-fingered Shedders have also grown and maintain 5,000 bedding plants (pictured below) for hanging baskets, planters and tubs for the small Town of Kennoway.

Chairman, Bob McPhail, said: "The project—worth an estimated £80,000—has all been achieved through the hard work and dedication of volunteers; donations of labour, materials and machinery from local organisations; and thanks to £9,000 funding from the Fife Environmental Trust (FET). We are also indebted to Robert Honeyman (who worked at Fife Council for 41 years) who kept us going with his vision for the space!"

"Fruit trees (17 different varieties off apple trees, a lemon tree, two cherry trees and a quince tree) have been planted and we have also been pickling beetroot and making tomato and cucumber chutney. This is all accompanied by a honey bee hive which is housing 35,000 bees and will get split into two hives soon.

"Now local people are sitting down to a meal with the produce that our Shedders have grown and, wow, that is some achievement. We are so proud and extremely grateful for the way the community has come together to see this project come to fruition."

For more information and updates on Kennoway Community Shed, please follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/groups/581961778666688](https://www.facebook.com/groups/581961778666688)





## Inverness Men's Shed's renovation project comes on leaps and bounds

A 1930s former sports pavilion in the grounds of Millburn Academy is currently being restored, at an estimated cost of £115,000, to serve as a new larger home for Inverness Men's Shed and its members.

The Shed—established in February 2014—has seen its membership increase considerably over the years to more than 100 men resulting in them outgrowing its former Gordon Terrace base.

In 2019, the group welcomed the transfer of the pavilion building on a 99-year lease at a cost of £1 per year from The Highland Council.

The new base (pictured above) has recently had a new main entrance and double glazed windows installed. Shed founder, Alan Michael, said: "The new entrance and windows have made a huge difference not only to the exterior look of the Shed but it has dramatically improved the light inside."

"When they built the Pavilion in 1938, they certainly meant for it to last and it took the expertise (and six hours of cutting!) of Cairngorm Windows to get through the rear wall to enable the door to be installed."

"Member Alex Fraser has lowered the new portacabin from Tulloch Homes onto its proper stance whilst another member (John Harrison) has started to paint the outside."

"Dave Henry, Donald MacQuarrie and Co. have totally gutted the toilet, put in a new fully-accessible floor and it is now ready for installation of the fittings. The electrician has been in and has started the initial wiring of the building."

"Now that this stage of the development is complete, we have started to tidy up the area and make it 'habitable'!"

"The guys are continuing to work on the interior strictly within the Covid-19 regulations. The refurbishment is well on its way and all those involved who have done an amazing amount of work over the last few months, now have the 'end in sight'."



"We suffered a setback when thieves stole a large copper boiler from the back of the building in August however, we have since installed a CCTV camera to improve security and are not going to let this set us back."

"Despite the Covid-19 situation and the restrictions of working it is amazing what the men have done. All members wish to thank all concerned very much indeed!"

"We do not know when we will be able to meet again, and carry on the great work that our members have all been doing the last few years, but we can only hope it will be soon."

For more information on Inverness Men's Shed and the progress on their new home, please visit [www.invernessmensshed.co.uk](http://www.invernessmensshed.co.uk) and follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/Shedder19](https://www.facebook.com/Shedder19)



## Galashiels Men's Shed wins Rotary 'Community Champions 2020' Award

Galashiels Men's Shed has been crowned one of Galashiels and District Rotary Club's 'Community Champions' of 2020.

Gala Men's Shed was announced as a Community Champion at the end of September for its work in manufacturing, collecting and distributing over 4,000 visors during the pandemic. The visors were given free to anyone in the local area that required them.

Gala Men's Shed members (along with Sheds in Selkirk and Coldstream and pupils from local Gala schools) stepped in to produce single use and re-usable visors—from the safety of their own homes—when there was an upsurge in demand for visors for key workers, carers and essential workers.

Men's Shed Development Officer at Volunteer Centre Borders, Ross Hall, who also won a Community Champion award said: "It was a long journey for us, we started out with six Shedders helping in April, as the demand for face visors was so high. Some weeks we were constructing visors in their hundreds and delivering them both locally and nationally."

"We worked with the Police Logistics Officer to get visors further afield as there were severe travel restrictions for us in the early days. After six months and having distributed over 4,000 visors, we needed a break and so we brought the team down to three people. We have been constructing cough shields for the past month from our workshop."

"I am so humbled by this award personally and more importantly the Galashiels Shedders have been recognised by their own community for standing up to the plate when there was not enough PPE for our key workers."

"Our inspiration stemmed from Kinross and District Men's Shed from whom we took some great advice and our own journey mirrored their trials and tribulations. We would also like to mention both Selkirk and Coldstream Sheds for their unwavering support and their own production lines for face visors. The Borders Shed network collectively produced and delivered over 9,000 visors at a time when the country was on the brink."

"It just goes to show the true values of being a Shedder, the camaraderie and standing shoulder to shoulder."

For more information on Gala Men's Shed, please follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GALA-MENS-SHED-2055907984456874](https://www.facebook.com/GALA-MENS-SHED-2055907984456874)



## Inverurie & District Men's Shed restores vintage signs and benches for new railway station

Inverurie & District Men's Shed (IDMS) has restored original signs and benches—that were once pride of place at the old Kintore Railway Station in Aberdeenshire before its closure in the mid-1960s—back to their former glory.

The station was shut down on the 7th December 1964 and many of its original Victorian-era fixtures were sadly lost. Thankfully, some collectors of Aberdeenshire heritage came forward with some items after hearing of the new £15 million station development.

One local farmer, Raymond Sharp, rediscovered two of the former station's signs gathering dust in his Shed—after saving them from a bonfire over 55 years ago—and these have been refurbished by IDMS in

time for the opening of the new station.

Archie Peebles, Chairman of IDMS, said: "We were delighted to be asked by Aberdeenshire Council to restore the signs and two bench seats that once stood in Kintore Railway Station. A new station has been built beside the town and the benches are being brought back into use in the new community garden overlooking the platform.

"Over the last twelve months, members—particularly Bernie Oates and Geoff Binfield (pictured above right on the bench)—have carried out this restoration project. We understand that Kintore Community Council provided funds for the project to Aberdeenshire Council. They have used cast iron legs and nameplates from the original benches along with fresh hardwood timber material supplied by Lethenty Mills, Inverurie to bring the benches back to their original beauty.

"They completed the job by painting the benches in the same colours worn, before nationalisation, by the Great North of Scotland Railway. The men also refurbished the two wall nameplates with the original white and sky blue colours to represent the original British Railways Scottish Region style of the 1950s and 60s."



The new Kintore Railway Station opened on Wednesday 15th October 2020.

For more updates from Inverurie & District Men's Shed, please visit their website at [www.inveruriemensshed.co.uk](http://www.inveruriemensshed.co.uk) or follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/Inverurie-District-Mens-Shed-807408422637968](https://www.facebook.com/Inverurie-District-Mens-Shed-807408422637968)

**Pictured:** Above—Geoff Binfield of IDMS sitting on the completed bench; and one of the finished benches and signs. Below—the bench and cast iron legs before restoration; and bottom right, Bernie and Geoff behind one of the original benches (photo taken prior to lockdown)







## Birthday Surprise for Vince!

Since our Shed (Macmerry Men's Shed) had to temporarily close in February due to Covid-19 and then the resulting nationwide lockdown, our Shed went digital.

Every Tuesday and Thursday at 2pm, we would host a Zoom video call for as many of our members who could attend. One of our Supervisors, Vince Proc, is almost always on our video calls and when he isn't able to make it, he is definitely missed.

In April this year, at the height of lockdown, it was Vince's birthday. Vince lost his wife a few years ago and not only was he shielding at this time, but his children and grandchildren don't live near to him. It became obvious he was suffering from the isolation during lockdown.

He had mentioned on our usual Thursday video call, that week, that it was going to be his birthday on that Saturday so I called up our Treasurer (Stewart Dearden) and suggested we try to set up a surprise birthday party video call for Vince. He agreed and I got the ball rolling to get other members on the call.

Saturday came and I set up the video call, got the members loaded in (most with their party hats/wigs on) then phoned Vince and asked if I could video call him. Vince was a bit confused as to why I wanted a video call but I eventually got him on the call.



**Pictured:** The birthday boy, Vince (middle of the bottom row)

To say he was surprised is an understatement! We had party music playing and even a birthday cake with candles. The downside to the birthday cake was Vince couldn't get a slice but, with the help of my 8-year-old daughter Olivia (bottom right of the above image), Vince "managed" to blow out his candles through the miracles of modern technology.

Looking back on it now, six months later, the video call that took a little bit of effort was more than worth it as we all saw a happiness come back to Vince's face that lockdown had chipped away in the days and weeks prior to that call.

**Stuart MacKenzie**  
**Secretary**  
**Macmerry Men's Shed**



## Zoom isn't for everyone! Why not try a socially-distanced Breakfast Club instead?

During this pandemic, I have found out that not all Shedders want to Zoom! When I have mentioned a potential Zoom meeting, there has been no uptake from our Shedders. I am not altogether enthusiastic about it myself but have found the online Shed Network meetings useful.

What worked for our Shed members was a pretty simple concept. Our Vice-Chairman belongs to another Breakfast Club and suggested we give it a go.

When The Angus Hotel in Blairgowrie was back in business, like most other similar establishments, we got in touch with them to discuss our options. The hotel is fully compliant with Government guidelines regarding social distancing and even offered us a separate room which gets used for private groups.

We emailed our members to see what response we might get to do a breakfast at the hotel and were delighted to hear that some members were keen. Six of us participated and we met on a Saturday morning at 9.15am and we were there until nearly 11am. We chose

a Saturday because some of our Shedders are still working and a weekday would not have suited. It offered us the chance to be together in person – all at the required distance – and the conversation was flowing.

This type of meeting was invaluable to those who look to the Shed for the social aspect and are not really interested in the saws, turning lathes and screwdrivers! I would say around 80% of our members are in that category. We plan to do another breakfast meeting in a month's time.

Whilst we have also met in a local park on a few occasions, the change in weather does not really allow for that in the winter months and so the breakfast option will really work for us going forward.

I am inclined to think that there may well be a few of our Shedders who might subscribe to the idea of a Breakfast Club in the long term too—even when Sheds are safe to reopen! Our Shed premises are small and if there is woodworking going on it can often be quite noisy and so the breakfast idea overcomes that aspect!

**Edwin Petrie**  
**Chairman**  
**Strathmore Men's Shed**



# A PERSONAL STORY



## Bruce Newlands, The Inverclyde Shed

***The Scottish Shedder interviews Bruce Newlands—an award-winning architect and Chair of the Scottish ‘Men’s Shed of the Year’ 2020, The Inverclyde Shed—to hear all about his personal journey.***

Bruce said: “When I lived in Glasgow, I was heavily involved in the creative technologies charity, MAKLab (Scotland’s first open access digital fabrication studio which aims to empower people and build confidence). I had heard a lot about Men’s Sheds and when I moved to Inverclyde in 2014, I did some research and found that—although there were Sheds in Dunoon, Helensburgh and Barrhead—there was not one for Inverclyde.

“I put out the feelers and made contact with George Banks and he was in the process of setting up a Shed in Inverclyde after leaving the Dunoon Shed. I offered to get involved and make use of my skills and background from MAKLab and as an architect with my own business, Kraft Architecture Ltd, where I work on a range of projects with various community groups and housing associations.

“I wanted somewhere to go to not only utilise my skillset—but also to support my own health and wellbeing. Making things and helping others is my own therapy and I felt that a local Shed was a good fit for me.

“One year on, I found myself accepting the Chairman’s position at the first AGM! We agreed a strategy (medium to long term) to apply for

funding to secure premises and offer the activities in demand in the area.

There really was no need to reinvent the wheel, so I arranged to take eight of our members on peer learning visits to other Sheds to get a good flavour of their set up and activities.

“What we saw at these Sheds was truly admirable—the powerful creators, the partnership working and the camaraderie! This proved to be invaluable to learn from others and what would (and would not) work in Inverclyde and understand the wide range of interests that Sheds cater for.

“We took on our first 700sqft Shed at Captain Street in Greenock in early 2019 and then expanded to include a second 700sqft workshop space by mid-2019.

“At one point, we found ourselves almost at the brink of closure—due to funding pressures—and could not afford to pay our rent. An anonymous donation came in that helped us pay next month’s rent and then another miracle happened—our Shed successfully secured funding from the National Community Lottery Fund (Improving Lives) in March 2019 (pictured below) where we secured

£77,000 over five years (£10,000 a year to cover the rent and £17,000 for equipment).

“This was a major turning point for us. This level of funding took away so much of the pressure well known to Sheds and allowed us to then concentrate on growing our membership; developing our Shed activities and also focus on attaining a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) for a new larger Shed (a 4,000sqft industrial unit in Greenock).

“In August 2019, we took over the management (and £1 annual lease) of an unused community garden space in Gourack from Inverclyde Council. The aim of this was to create a space for our members to get involved with gardening, physical work and reap the benefits to their health and wellbeing from being outdoors.

“The garden has been a great success. It is such a reflective space but it is also providing so much to our local community. The Shed has been donating the healthy seasonal produce to elderly and vulnerable groups in our community which has been so rewarding and just recently we have started providing fruit and vegetables to a local nursery.

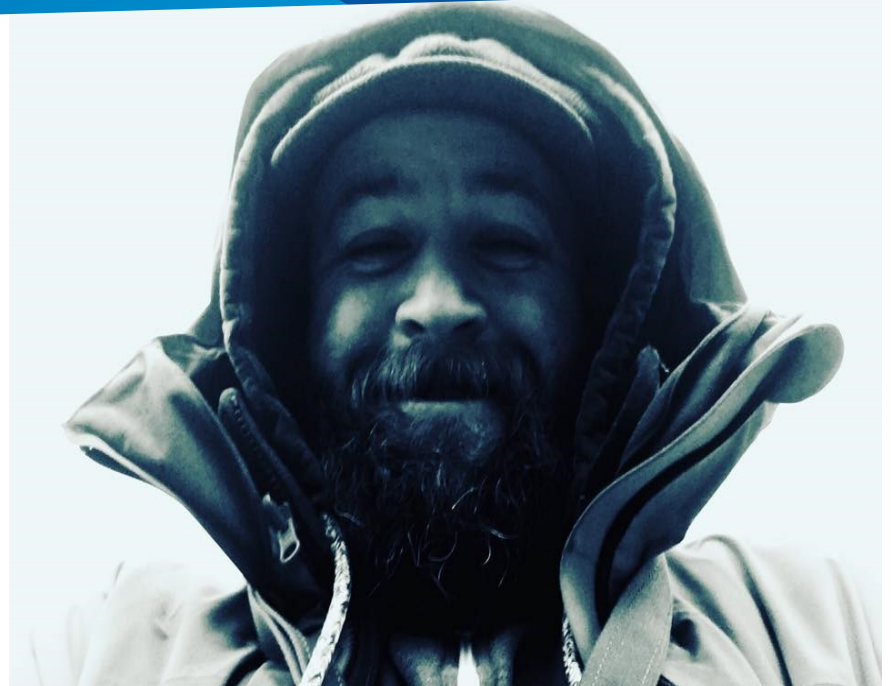
“I am personally fortunate enough to live close enough to the Shore Street garden. Throughout lockdown, I threw myself into planting and growing to find a sense of calm and peacefulness. I very much welcomed this change of pace to my life delivered by our Shed.



*Continued on next page...*



## A PERSONAL STORY (Continued)



*...continued from previous page*

"In March 2020, we were successful with our CAT request for a 4,000sqft industrial unit in Greenock and renovation is set to begin in May 2021 (subject to success with the Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund). This 25-year, £1 per annum, lease—the first with Inverclyde Council—could secure our Shed for the next generation of Shedders.

"I am immensely proud of how the Shed has grown and what it has achieved in such a short space of time. Every single member gets a say/vote on what we do and this approach has enabled us to attract a lot of interest from the people of Inverclyde.

"Personally, the Shore Street Community Garden is one of my proudest achievements. It became even more popular in lockdown and a place where members of the community and our Shedders could come for their daily exercise; have some peace and quiet and time to reflect; but it has also become a 'stage' for locals to find out more about the Shed and what we do."

With so much happening at The Inverclyde Shed—including the recent launch of a smaller satellite Shed focusing on digital fabrication/ distance working to try and help address Covid-19 restrictions on gatherings—what does the future

hold for Bruce and the Shed?

Bruce said: "What has been achieved to date has been far from easy. We have had our struggles but have worked together as a team and are delighted to see this hard work pay off with the widening of our demographic to attract more men along to the Shed.

"We didn't just fall into the stereotype of our heritage to only offer boat building to our members (although we believe that it is still very important to learn these traditional skills) but we have diversified to attract members with a variety of interests—including gardening and electronics—offering men a range of options to get involved.

"That said, I feel it is time for a wee change for me now. I have owned my own company for almost 20 years and strongly believe in maintaining a good work-life balance.

"I have made the decision to concentrate more on myself and my family (my wife Erika and my one-year old daughter, Ruby). My focus at the Shed will mostly be through the community garden, the new larger Shed and helping with the funding applications but I also want to engross myself in enjoying Shed life to the full!

"I see the physical and mental health benefits of Sheds and for me it is about making things, the

camaraderie, the banter and seeing other guys achieving things and the pride that they feel. I believe that Sheds are places that can accommodate many different perspectives and experiences and we should celebrate this.

"I work from home and, for me, our community garden has been the place that I can go to get some head space without any interruptions. I am diabetic and have lost so much weight working in the garden and have never felt better.

"I have learnt so much about gardening and the Shed has secured funds for me to undertake some training with the Royal Horticultural Society Scotland to learn even more and maximise the potential of the community garden.

"With the Shed now not having the pressure of rent to pay, there is certainly plenty to keep us busy. There are funded plans to triple the size of the community garden with work having already started to form a secure orchard space that will produce a harvest for our local community but also a space of reflection for members."

"Winning the title of SMSA's Scottish 'Shed of the Year' 2020 has been the icing on the cake for us and sets the tone for our ambitious plans for our Shed going forward."

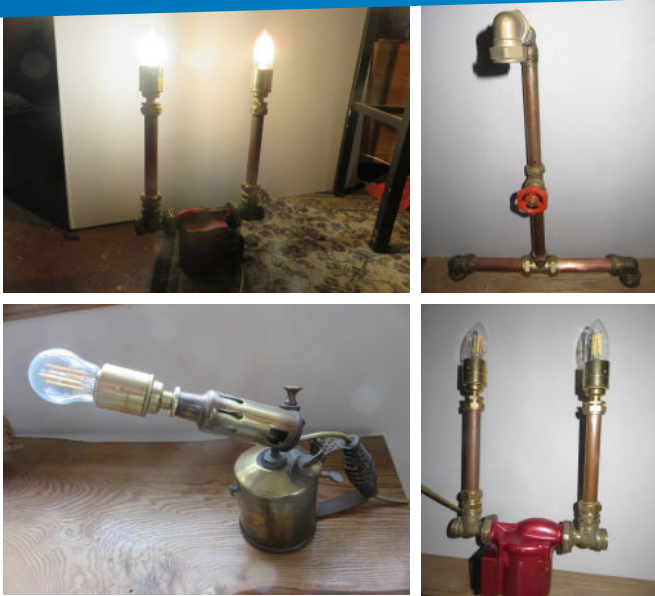
**For more information on The Inverclyde Shed, please visit [www.inverclydeshed.co.uk](http://www.inverclydeshed.co.uk) or follow them on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn).**

***"I want to engross myself in enjoying Shed life to the full."***

***Bruce Newlands,  
The Inverclyde Shed***



# SHED PROJECTS



## Cullen Shedder is full of bright ideas!

Stan Slater from [Cullen Men's Shed](#) has been busy in lockdown creating some unique lamps made from an old heating system.

Stan said: "The red item is the old heating circulation pump with the internal coil removed to give space for the wiring connections to be made. The single lamp has still to be finished but it will have a golf ball LED fitted."

"All parts used have come from [Lamp Spares](#). They offer a variety of ways to fix a lampholder either using bungs or stop ends, you can also make the stop ends yourself."

## St Andrews Men's Shed to the rescue!

After a request came in from a concerned St Andrews resident about the state of the benches in Woodburn Park, [St Andrews Men's Shed](#) and the brilliant team from Clean & Green have been down and repaired the benches. Great job guys!



## Partnership projects from Cromarty Firth Men's Shed

The Scottish Shedder got wind of some great partnership projects that the Cromarty Firth Men's Shed members had been working on of late and caught up with their Secretary, David Chambers, to find out more.

David said: "The play boat (pictured below left) is for local school children at Milton Primary School and is

made entirely from scrap wood - mostly pallets. The small people want to name it "Holly". We also made a train (modelled below by Shed mascot, Shedley) and a wheelbarrow planter for a local play park in Shillinghill and will also be making some large mushrooms for them.

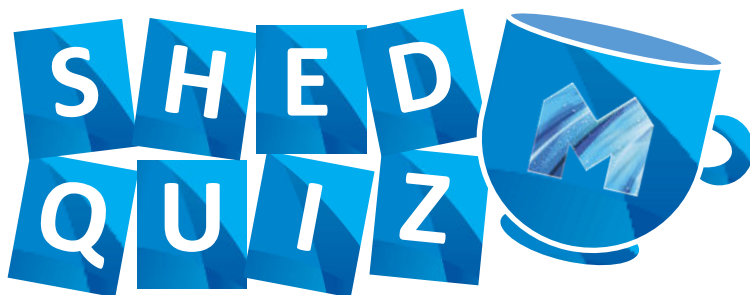
"The Shed has also secured a repeat order for 30 mink rafts. This order will certainly be a challenge under current restrictions, but where there's a will there's a way!"

For more information on Cromarty Firth Men's Shed, please visit <https://cf-ms.co.uk>





# SHED SHENANIGANS



Why not grab a cuppa and take part in our fun 'Scottish Places' Acronym quiz!

*Compiled by:*

*A. Shedder, Three Towns Men's Shed*

## 'Spread Shared Ideas'

Each answer is a place in Scotland. The first letter of every answer will then spell out an acronym of what your Shed is to you! Also, what is the link to the quiz title?

	ANSWER	FIRST LETTER
<i>Example: CEFFIR</i>	<i>CRIEFF</i>	<i>(C)</i>
1. ACCEHHMRTTUUY	_____	_____
2. AEEHNNOSTV	_____	_____
3. BEEGHHLNRSU	_____	_____
4. BDEGHINRU	_____	_____
5. CDHNOOR	_____	_____
6. ADEGILLMNNOT	_____	_____
7. DEEEILLRS	_____	_____
8. HORSTY	_____	_____
9. AAENRRRST	_____	_____
10. CHILOPTY	_____	_____
11. ABDEEENR	_____	_____
12. AARRTTY	_____	_____
13. AADEILNRX	_____	_____
14. ADEGNNUV	_____	_____
15. EIINRV	_____	_____
16. EIKKLR	_____	_____
17. EEIKNRS	_____	_____

**Need a haun?**  
**Click here tae check yer answers!**





## Have you been affected by cancer?

The Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) – in partnership with [Macmillan Cancer Support](#) – wants to hear from Sheddies that have cancer, have had cancer or who are supporting or caring for someone with cancer.

Cancer doesn't just affect the person; it also affects family members, friends, carers and communities. A life-changing diagnosis can influence relationships, finances, careers and emotions. Men's Sheds offer an empowering place for men to come together

voluntarily to make friends, re-engage with purpose, enjoy healthy lives and even learn new skills. Even though Sheds are temporarily closed, due to Covid-19 restrictions, these strong connections with fellow Sheddies are still being maintained.

**SMSA is looking to bring together a group of men willing to meet online to share their cancer experiences and stories.** What helped most? What were the challenges/barriers? What type of cancer? What was missing on your journey? What improvements could have been



**SCOTTISH  
MEN'S SHEDS  
ASSOCIATION**

**MACMILLAN  
CANCER SUPPORT**

made? All these real-life experiences, from a male perspective, will assist SMSA to develop effective resources and ultimately, save lives.

This invaluable information will be used to produce health-focused information leaflets and a series of animations for Men's Sheds across Scotland to support men going through this journey. The aim of this project is to raise awareness of the impact cancer has in men's lives (of all ages) and to encourage more men to be aware of it earlier on. The Shed is the perfect place for these conversations and for the knowledge to be shared.

### Interested?

Please contact Jason Schroeder, SMSA Executive Officer, on 07397382533 or email [ceo@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:ceo@scottishmsa.org.uk)

## Movember is on the horizon

## Things are about to get hairy!



This year has thrown some big curveballs, to say the least. It's been a challenging time and the world has changed. But a lot of things stay the same: men's health is still in crisis, and we still need help to stop men dying too young.

After the bumpy road of 2020, Movember is a way to unite, give back, have fun and connect with each other – to do good and save lives by raising funds and awareness for mental health and suicide prevention, prostate cancer and testicular cancer.



**MOVEMBER®**

So, how will you Mo this year? Did you know you can Grow, Move or Host to raise much-needed funds for men's health? Or go big and combine them!

Visit <https://uk.movember.com> to find out more.





## My journey through lockdown using new-found skills and mindfulness

By David Davies, St Andrews Men Shed

**Mindfulness:** the quality or state of being conscious or aware of something.

Having undertaken a mindfulness course at Maggie's Dundee in 2019, I found the experience and techniques valuable but, to be honest, did not use them to their fullest advantage.

I would find myself in situations and only then did I reactively revert to the skills and techniques I had learned—and to a large extent they did help. If anything I was using mindfulness to get me out of situations instead of dealing with them!

It was in my armoury however I found myself trying to sort the issues out myself and not always with a successful outcome.

In early 2020, I spent some time again in Maggie's in a one-to-one situation. This second episode really concentrated my mind and got me to appreciate what I could achieve. 2020 saw us all in a very different world, an environment which did not allow social contact or being able to use any of the other techniques I would normally use in stressful situations.

This is when I discovered the world of woodturning. I had attended a couple of meetings at my local Men's Shed (St Andrews Men's Shed) and was introduced to a couple of gents there who were working on a wood lathe. I was encouraged to try it for myself and with some trepidation, had a go.

Having dropped woodwork when I was at school, my only experience with wood was as an enthusiastic DIY'er, not always with the desired outcome. I gladly accepted the offer

and, with close supervision and encouragement, started making a wooden apple. This project took me the best part of two sessions at the Shed. The end product (even if I say so myself) was impressive. The colour, the smoothness and the smell of the wood and the beeswax sheen was something I was immensely proud of. Not only was I pleased, my wife thought it was 'super'. Her encouragement for me to attend the Men Shed had paid off.

With lockdown, the Shed had to close so I decided to buy a lathe to use at home. The first one turned up but was broken so had to be returned. This would have really annoyed me in the past but I knew how to deal with it. I had the calmness to deal with the situation as I knew that there was nothing I could change other than to send it back.

I sent for another one from a different outlet and this arrived safe and sound. I took great delight in setting it up and trying all the buttons, levers and knobs. But what was I going to use it for? I had watched a gentleman turning a wooden bowl and thought I would have a go at that. I sent away for a selection of wood pieces commonly known as blanks, so that I could start.

My first solo effort in the seclusion of my own garage was, if I am honest, a little stressful. What if I make a mistake? What if I make a mess of it? What if it doesn't turn out how I wanted it to? I prepared the best I could; made sure everything was safe, all the equipment was available, worked out in my head what to do and in what order.

I put the wood in the lathe, switched it on, got what I thought was the correct chisel and away I went. Not too fast a speed, not too much pressure on the chisel, don't chop away too much wood, take small strokes. This was stress; I felt my muscles tense up, my shoulders ache, my back was sore, all this and I had only been going ten minutes.

It was at this point I stopped, took a step back and said to myself 'It doesn't matter if it all goes wrong, it's only a piece of wood'. I took a deep breath and it was only then that I really started using my senses. I could smell the wood, the humming of the lathe was soothing, my touch with the chisel became light and although it was a long way from being done, I could see in my own mind what I was going to create.

I only worked for fairly short periods to begin with as I reminded myself that there was no urgency to get this finished. Everything was going well, or so I thought. I had to turn the wood around in the lathe to create the bowl, I had cut away too much wood and it didn't fit in the lathe.

I may have been annoyed and upset in the past but I switched off the equipment, went into the house for a hot drink and systematically and logically worked out a solution to my problem. The next day, I used some of the tape from my first aid kit to bulk out the tenon on the wood until it was thick enough to fit into the lathe. With a big smile and a pat on the back, I turned out my first bowl. The finishing of the bowl involves sanding, smoothing and feeling for imperfections. This can only be done if you are calm, responsive and willing to repeat the process. I had not realised that the time spent in the garage was so calming. I was hooked.

Pleased with my initial effort, I tried a second bowl—this was somehow a different experience to my first one. It didn't look the same, did not take the shape and even smelt different. It dawned on me, not all wood is the same, it also got me to realise that I was, without thinking using my senses in a positive way. The pattern in the wood and the feel of the grain got me thinking—every challenge is different but the way I tackle them is basically the same, and this mirrored life.

On my walks with my dog (Amber), not only was I exercising her and myself, I was seriously taking in the environment around me. I was taking different paths I had never travelled before. I found pieces of wood that I took home and started to imagine what this simple piece of wood could be turned into: another apple; an egg cup; or a candlestick. The limit was only in my mind.

Some of my creations started off really well and with me trying to be too clever, bits flew off, a bowl ended up looking like an ashtray, this in the past would have angered me but my coping strategy was 'every day is a school day' let's learn from this and move on. I was now happy occupying my mind and body but without stress.

I have made that many things, my wife comments 'not another bowl' but I try and tell her this is slightly different from the last one because; it is shallower, the lip is deeper, the stripes on the side are not the same. To be fair, she has been very supportive in my efforts and often compliments me on the work I have completed. To say that all this has been extremely satisfying is very much an understatement.

Reflecting now on the past and what was discussed during Mindfulness sessions and the way we should use it as part of our daily life techniques makes sense, I feel it is now part of my routine. Whether it is the actual act of using the lathe or the place it takes me to is I feel immaterial but I know it works for me!



# WHAT'S COOKING?

When SMSA interviewed Bruce Newlands from The Inverclyde Shed for his personal story for this issue's Shedder ([see pages 14 & 15](#)), he told us about this nutritious recipe using brassica vegetables—like cabbage, sprouts, kale and spinach— from their Shore Street Community Garden to make this delicious soup and we just had to share!

This recipe is not just seasonal and healthy, it is also perfect to make a big pot for sharing with family or to deliver to fellow Shedders in your community.

**Top Tip:** One of Bruce's top tips is to use the large lower leaves from the cabbage/sprout plants. Bruce said: "These leaves are often thrown away but are highly nutritious and perfect for winter-warmer soups!"

The Inverclyde Shed also has some exciting plans afoot to build a smokehouse in the future and we look forward to hearing what they cook up next! Watch this space!

## Ingredients

- 2 onions, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 chorizo sausage, finely chopped (or 1 tsp of smoked paprika for a vegetarian version)
- 6 large tatties, diced
- 2 litres of good vegetable or chicken stock
- shredded cabbage/kale/spinach (or all three!)
- salt and pepper to taste
- crusty bread and butter to serve

## Method

1. Fry the onions and garlic in the olive oil (in a soup pot on a medium heat) until softened
2. Chop the chorizo into small pieces and add to the pan with the onion (or add smoked paprika for vegetarian option)
3. Fry the onions and sausage for a few more minutes and then add the diced tatties so that they absorb all the flavour
4. Add the stock and simmer until the potatoes are soft
5. Meanwhile, shred the cabbage (as much as you like and using the varieties you like). Kale and spinach can be added too
6. Add as much cabbage as the broth will support. If you want a heavy soup add loads of greens. If lighter, add less
7. Simmer for a few more minutes. The soup will go the colour of jade, you can mash the tatties a bit if you like a thicker soup
8. Serve with crusty bread and butter, season to taste and enjoy!

## Caldo Verde Portuguese Green Soup

 Prep: 15 mins Cooking: 45 mins





# FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

## Volunteering Matters Action

**Earth** is now accepting applications to support local volunteers and environmental groups to carry out work in local green spaces to rebuild slowly, steadily and safely while carrying out essential environmental work that benefits communities across Scotland.



Any group of 15 or more volunteers can apply for a £250 awards—provided by Scottish Natural Heritage—to help make a difference outdoors through planting and habitat building projects. They are especially keen to hear from projects taking place in deprived areas where there are fewer local amenities. There are also a few £500 grants available for projects which primarily involve people with defined health conditions and disabilities.

For more information, please visit <https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk/project/action-earth>



**Giveacar** is a social enterprise that recycles old cars whilst raising money for charity.

Get your supporters to donate their rust bucket and raise funds for your Shed. Giveacar

handles up to 500 cars and donates thousands of pounds to over 100 charities on average each month. Register your Shed online at <https://giveacar.co.uk>



The £1 million Scottish Government **Scotland Loves Local** Fund aims to empower communities by enabling local delivery and giving support and guidance to help them achieve aims important to them. Providing grants of between £500 and £5,000, the fund is open to constituted community groups with bank accounts and suitable governance controls. Apply online (by the 25th November 2020) at [www.scotlandstowns.org/scotland-loves-local-fund-application-form-and-guidance](http://www.scotlandstowns.org/scotland-loves-local-fund-application-form-and-guidance)

## The Henry Smith Charity

**The Henry Smith Charity**—Improving Lives grants support projects with funding from £20,000–£60,000 per year (for a length of 1-3 years) to cover running costs, salaries and projects.

Charities and not-for-profit organisations, including social enterprises, can apply at any time with a turnaround of six months for a decision. Due to the six month process, the funder is asking for groups to detail applications how you would wish to deliver your services once the current government restrictions have been lifted.

There are six priority areas—one being 'Support networks and family'. This priority area involves funding projects that help people develop positive social networks and/or family relationships; support people to cultivate relationships that provide emotional and practical support, increase resilience and foster a sense of connectedness.

For more information, please visit [www.henrysmithcharity.org.uk/explore-our-grants-and-apply](http://www.henrysmithcharity.org.uk/explore-our-grants-and-apply)



The £8 million national **Cycling Facilities Fund**—from the Scottish Government and

National Lottery—aims to capitalise on the upsurge of interest in cycling during the pandemic by developing a network of accessible, inclusive and inspiring facilities that encourage people of all ages to ride bikes.

Grants of up to £500,000 are available across Scotland to: inspire the nation to cycle by developing accessible, inclusive and inspiring facilities; grow and develop club and community cycling through multi-discipline hubs with safe coaching and skills development areas; and to develop the events infrastructure by building/upgrading facilities capable of hosting local and regional events.

For more information, please visit <https://sportscotland.org.uk/funding/cycling-facilities-fund>

**ALPKIT** The Alpkit Foundation is the charity that helps people 'Go Nice Places, Do Good Things'.

However, the pandemic has called for a shift of focus over the coming months. The Foundation is now prioritising its funds (1% of sales and at least 10% of annual profit) to support grassroots projects that demonstrate an immediate impact on those affected by the Covid-19 virus crisis.

Examples include:

- Being active in your local community to help elderly or vulnerable people
- Minimising the impact of self-isolation for those in quarantine and need access to food, medicines or social care

Trustees meet every two months. Apply online at:

<https://alpkit.com/pages/foundation#apply>



**The Barrack Charitable Trust** supports registered charities with grants of between £500 and £5,000.

The Trustees favour project funding and currently, the major categories under which the Trustees will consider include: the provision of recreational facilities, or the organisation of recreational facilities, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the users; and the relief of those in need by reason of age, ill-health and disability.

Apply online at <http://thebarrackcharitabletrust.co.uk/grant-application>

## Have you won shedloads of funding?

**SMSA wants to hear about your funding success stories so that we can share it with others. Please contact [comms@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:comms@scottishmsa.org.uk)**



# UPDATE FROM AGE SCOTLAND



With the help of corporate partners—[Sky Cares](#), [Scottish Gas](#) and [BNP Paribas](#)—Age Scotland's Health and Wellbeing Fund 2020 awarded one-off, small community grants to support the health and wellbeing of older people in Age Scotland member Men's Sheds.

The grants were designed to help Sheds get through the Covid-19 pandemic and continue to support Shed members.

Our sister organisation Age UK was also able to distribute some of the funds raised by Children in Need and Comic Relief's '[Big Night In](#)'.

Thirteen Men's Sheds successfully applied and a variety of projects were supported:

1. **Aboyne and District Men's Shed**—to pay for buildings insurance costs and the cost of a Wi-Fi hub and phone
2. **Banchory Men's Shed**—supported by the 'Big Night In' through Age UK to pay for Wi-Fi installation and running costs
3. **Culter Men's Shed**—to purchase PPE and signage to enable their Shed to reopen to members when it is safe to do so
4. **Denny and Bonnybridge Men's Shed**—supported by Scottish Gas to purchase IT equipment, software, and training for members
5. **Dumfries Men's Shed**—to purchase a 3D printer and mug printer
6. **Ferryhill Railway Heritage Trust**—supported by the 'Big Night In' through Age UK to improve health and safety for members returning to Men's Shed activities through installation of handwashing facilities; purchase of storage cabinets for individual tool storage; and purchase of a desktop PC to assist with health and safety resources and training
7. **Kennoway Community Shed**—supported by Sky Cares to purchase items to assist weekly support delivery to their members and older people during the Covid-19 health emergency including plywood screws and bolts; plastic containers with lids; quality plastic cups with lids; and carrier bags
8. **Men of Leith Men's Shed**—to purchase window blinds for their Shed to enable members to use the computing facilities, and for mobile broadband top-up for dongles
9. **Moffat and District Men's Shed**—to purchase a computer system and printer to aid communications with members
10. **Nairn Men's Shed**—to improve facilities and increase number of people able to safely participate in Shed activities when the Covid-19 health pandemic eases. Grant to assist with the plumbing costs of installing toilet and handwashing facilities, and to purchase kitchen units for their new meeting space
11. **Selkirk Community Shed**—to subscribe to Zoom Pro Software Package for a year

12. **Three Towns Men Shed**—supported by BNP Paribas to purchase Airtop hot drinks flasks for outdoor work, a non-contact thermometer, PPE and disposable cups
13. **Wee County Men's Shed**—support with utility bills and broadband to enable them to be ready for re-opening after the current lockdown is eased without accumulating a debt for these items

You can read about other projects that were awarded funding in the [media](#).

If you would like your Shed to take up free membership with Age Scotland, please contact me.

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## UPCOMING ONLINE SHED NETWORK MEETINGS

**Ayrshire Men's Shed Network**  
Friday 4th December 2020  
10am-12pm

**Lothians Men's Shed Network**  
Wednesday 13th January 2021  
10am-12pm

**Fife Men's Shed Network**  
Wednesday 13th January 2021  
2pm-4pm

**Perth and Kinross (and Clackmannanshire)  
Men's Shed Network**  
Thursday 14th January 2021  
10am-12pm

**Highlands and Islands (and Moray)  
Men's Shed Network**  
Friday 15th January 2021  
10am-12pm



# WHAT'S ON?



## St Andrews Shedder holds solo art exhibition

Zimbabwe-born artist Brad Eggleston—a member and Trustee of St Andrews Men's Shed—is holding his first solo art exhibition, *'Africa Made Me'* in Dundee this month.

Brad had his initial plans for an exhibit in May postponed due to Covid-19 but with Scottish Men's Sheds closed and Brad being furloughed earlier in the year, he used his spare time to push full steam ahead for when the time was right for the big unveiling of his work.

In August, Brad came up with the unique plan to transform his garden on Main Street in Kingsbarns into an outdoor art gallery (pictured above right) to allow local art lovers to have a pre-exhibit sneak peek at his paintings safely. Brad said: "I was overwhelmed by the



response to the gallery in my front garden. I promoted it around my village and on social media and it was hugely popular. I am thrilled that my art has been such a big hit using this unique approach in lockdown.

"I am delighted to now be showcasing my paintings at Dock Street Studios in my first official exhibition and invite Sheddies far and wide to make an appointment to come along to take a look."

**'Africa Made Me' - An Exhibition by Umlungu**  
**Open every Thursday to Saturday (10am- 23pm)**  
**Until Saturday 21st of November 2020**  
**Dock Street Studios, Dock Street, Dundee, DD1 4BT**  
**Meet the artist - Umlungu will be**  
**creating in the gallery daily**  
**Viewing - Pop in or make an appointment**  
**with Sara 01382 767747**  
[www.umlunguart.com](http://www.umlunguart.com)

## Strathmore Men's Shed to feature in BBC's 'My Kind of Town' series

Strathmore Men's Shed will feature in a new BBC documentary, set to air this month, exploring the lives of Scot in their home towns.

The upcoming episode *'My Kind of Town: Blairgowrie'* follows presenter Ian Hamilton and his guide dog, Major, as he checks out what Blairgowrie and Rattray in Perthshire has to offer including chatting to the members of Strathmore Men's Shed about how they feel about the place and what the future might hold.

Edwin Petrie of Strathmore Men's Shed said: "We were delighted that the BBC approached us to take part in the documentary. The interview took place in August in lockdown and although it is unfortunate that we could not show off the Shed due to Covid-19 restrictions, it was a great opportunity for our members to meet in the park to share their own personal stories, what the Shed has to offer and also the benefits of Shed's to men's health and wellbeing. We are very much looking forward to watching it!"

**Strathmore Men's Shed will feature about 21 minutes into the programme. The programme is set to air at 8.30pm on BBC Scotland on the 26th November 2020.**



## Nairn Men's Shed Permanent Zoom Room

Nairn Men's Shed is happy for people to join them on Wednesdays from 10am in their Zoom room at:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4015682513?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4015682513?pwd=ZXhhSVJxaUs2cjBMMnZmdDM3OUx2UT09)  
[pwd=ZXhhSVJxaUs2cjBMMnZmdDM3OUx2UT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4015682513?pwd=ZXhhSVJxaUs2cjBMMnZmdDM3OUx2UT09)

**Do you have an online room that is open to all?**  
**Please let SMSA know at [comms@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:comms@scottishmsa.org.uk)**  
**and we will advertise to others.**

## Public Policy Dissertation on Men's Sheds

A final year Honours student from the University of the West of Scotland in Paisley is writing his Public Policy dissertation on the benefits of Men's Sheds.

The success of this project will depend on finding some Men's Shed members in the West of Scotland who are willing to take part in a short 'Zoom' interview to share their story of attending a Shed.

**If you wish to be involved, please contact Ian Keir at [iankeir@outlook.com](mailto:iankeir@outlook.com) or [B00284997@studentmail.uws.ac.uk](mailto:B00284997@studentmail.uws.ac.uk)**





The Scottish Shedder is the official free newsletter of the Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA). It inspires and informs Scottish Sheddors and Movement supporters of the achievements, changes and ongoing requirements to successful Shed creation across Scotland.

We aim to publish eight editions of the newsletter each year and send it digitally to all of our subscribers. All editions are archived in the [SMSA online library](https://www.scottishmsa.org.uk/online-library) for Individual Members to access at any time (log-in required).

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