

# THE SCOTTISH SHEDDER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE

SCOTTISH  
MEN'S SHEDS  
ASSOCIATION

## Consultation: SMSA Reopening Guidance for Scottish Sheds

In lockdown, **SMSA is still advising all Sheds to remain closed**—until further guidance is issued from The Scottish Government. The Association has taken this time to consult with its Shed members and partner organisations on the reopening guidance that it has been working on for several months.

The guidance (containing a 16-page document, risk assessment, new member registration form, shed visit rota, track and trace form and a cleaning checklist) provides advice and

examples only for Men's Sheds in Scotland on steps and safety measures in relation to Covid-19 to follow to safely reopen their doors again when the time is right.

SMSA wishes to thank everyone that took the time to respond to the consultation including our Shed members, Healthy Working Lives, Public Health Scotland, Age Scotland and the Scottish Government. SMSA is now currently collating all of the feedback received and will revise the document accordingly. This guidance is by no means definitive and is something that will be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis over time.

## WHAT'S INSIDE?

- 2 TALKING SHEDS
- 3 SMSA NEWS
- 4 SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT
- 6 SHED LIFE
- 16 A PERSONAL STORY
- 18 SHED PROJECTS
- 21 SHED QUIZ
- 22 HEALTH MATTERS
- 23 WHAT'S COOKING?
- 24 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
- 25 AGE SCOTLAND UPDATE

## Emergency Funding for Sheds

The SMSA has secured vital funds, through the Scottish Government, to support Scottish Men's Sheds in crisis.

Funds still remain in this £30,000 emergency pot to assist Sheds, most severely affected by the pandemic, that are struggling with financial pressures and/or facing closure to ensure they are still here to support Sheddors when they are able to safely open their doors once again.

COVID-19 forced Sheds to close temporarily, calling a halt to many fundraising activities, and impacting heavily on income. This fund will support new and existing Sheds, large and small, to cover core running costs to offset lost income. SMSA will aim to help those Sheds in crisis to give them the peace of mind to ensure they are still here in the future when Sheds will be needed most.

The fund is open for SMSA Shed Members to apply online through the Association ([click here to join for free if your Shed is not already a member](#)). Sheds can apply for core running costs (e.g. rent, heat and light, insurance etc) to keep them open in the upcoming months. Priority will be made to Sheds with an unrestricted funds bank balance of less than £1,000.

Once it's gone, it's gone—apply today at [www.scottishmsa.org.uk/crisis-grants-for-scottish-mens-sheds](http://www.scottishmsa.org.uk/crisis-grants-for-scottish-mens-sheds)

FUNDS  
STILL  
AVAILABLE!  
APPLY  
TODAY!

## 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 19th March 2021**.

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

I know it is February but as this is the first Scottish Shedder of 2021...Happy New Year everyone!

Christmas feels like so long ago, even though I am snowed in and currently in a blizzard in Aberdeenshire as I write this. The winter wonderland scene from my window looks like the front of the proverbial Christmas card but like the 'other thing' (that we will not mention), I have had enough of it as well. Now I have had my moan, the grumpy guy is feeling a bit better and on we go...

Since the new year, we have been busy on quite a few fronts and we held a very successful national Zoom meeting with 93 registered delegates on the 21st January. This event gauged where the Shed movement was at after the Christmas period and to share the good news of our two successful Scottish Government grants for Emergency Shed Funding and the Pathfindr - Safe Distancing Assistants equipment.

SMSA had ten Scottish Men's Sheds trial them late last year with very positive results. We now have enough funding to equip all Scottish Sheds to cater for small group activities safely-distanced (when measures ease) especially those men who have no digital connectivity and are very isolated.

To date, we have had an additional 27 Sheds apply to receive devices. If you are interested and have not yet applied, please [complete the online form](#) through the SMSA website, read Wee County Men's Shed story on [page 13](#) and also watch the video Moffat Men's Shed (link below) kindly made for us before lockdown to demonstrate them in use.

They are expensive pieces of kit at £60 each but we feel that they are well worth it for what they can deliver - confidence, reassurance, safety and enable isolated people to meet and support each other again! We are the only Men's Sheds Association in the UK offering this and they are FREE, so please make sure your Shed is a SMSA **Shed** member to request your devices. If you are not already a Shed member, [click here](#) to join for FREE today.

SMSA also has Emergency Shed Funding still available for those Sheds who have cash 'non ringfenced' reserves of less than £1,000. Check out the [front page](#) for details on how to apply.

*Continued on page 3...*



CLICK HERE to play the Pathfindr demonstration video from Moffat Men's Shed



131

SMSA SHED MEMBERS

2,449

SMSA INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS



131

OPEN SHEDS

55

SHEDS IN DEVELOPMENT



32

LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS

## UPDATE YOUR DETAILS WITH THE SMSA



New email address?



Moved house?



Not sure if you are a member or not?

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

[Click here to notify/contact the SMSA](#)

# TALKING SHEDS (CONTINUED)

*...continued from page 2*

Due to an SMSA poll carried out in September 2020, we were made aware that some Sheds were open in the tiers. SMSA has been working for several months to create a very comprehensive Scotland-based Covid-19 specific guidance document which we put out for consultation to various partner organisations, professional bodies and our Shed member boards. SMSA will soon release the revised version for your guidance on reopening the Sheds when or if the time is right for your individual Shed. The guidance is there for Sheds to use, cross-reference or leave as each Shed feels as it is your Shed. We wish to take this opportunity to again thank all of you who took part in this extremely important consultation exercise.

If, during the course of the pandemic, you have had a change around of your board and/or contact details, please do let us know so we can update our records otherwise you might miss out on our latest news updates, local tool donations, funding and new members trying to contact you on our [Find a Shed map](#). [Please click here](#) to advise us of any changes or to ask us to check the details we hold for you.

Dr Danielle Hutcheon (nee Kelly) from the Yunus Centre for Social Business and Health at Glasgow Caledonian University has just had [the latest Shed research paper published](#) (see below for more info) and we look forward to two more published papers and the co-creation of a Shed Tool kit later in the year. Watch this space.

The [Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator \(OSCR\)](#) has let us know that if you haven't changed your Shed constitution to accept online meetings you need to do it before the 30th March 2021 deadline. After this date, the 'grace' period is finished and AGM's etc will not be accepted as valid meetings. So please do get that sorted as soon as possible. [Click here](#) for details on how to make changes to your charity through OSCR's website. The majority of Sheds have used our OSCR Shed approved constitution and we will update this for you to

## Research paper released—Men's Sheds in Scotland: the potential for improving the health of men

The latest research paper '[Men's Shed in Scotland: the potential for improving the health of men](#)' from Glasgow Caledonian University's three-year Sheds for Sustainable Development Project has now been published in the Journal of Public Health Policy.

Recently policy has focused on the role of community-based organisations and the ways that they are tackling local health issues, such as social isolation and loneliness.

Men's Sheds have been recognised for the health and wellbeing impacts they have on those who use them, therefore, questions have been raised over their ability to become deliverers of formal healthcare to 'hard to reach' men in communities.

With this in mind, a study was conducted with Sheds in Scotland to identify challenges to Shed sustainability and development that may affect their ability to deliver formal healthcare.

use and submit it in our online resource library for Sheds. Please note that there are two different constitutions depending if you are doing (or plan to do) a SCIO Community Asset Transfer building 'Ownership' transfer.

Lastly, there have been some Shed discussions which has reached our ears regarding the relationship the SMSA has with Age Scotland and the Shed network meetings which Age Scotland's Tim Green, Shed Development Officer often co-ordinates. As a small charity of only three employees (presently two), we work with several 'partner' organisations so we don't duplicate the work load or re-invent the wheel just like what we do to support the Sheds.

The SMSA has for many years tried to get adequate funding for several SMSA regional development officers but to date has been unsuccessful and so besides myself also doing development work we are fortunate to have Tim exclusively focussed on this role. Tim and I work 'shoulder to shoulder', often leading or supporting each other to whatever best suits the event. We both focus on exclusively supporting you and the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement.

Well that's all folks for this edition and I hope by the next one we might have the good news we are all waiting for, which is to go back into the Tier levels and open our Sheds again in some shape and form if we choose to do so. Please do get those emergency funding and Pathfindr applications into us so you are good to go.

Stay light, stay bright...  
spring is on the way!

**Jason Schroeder**  
SMSA Executive Officer



Findings showed that a reliance on ageing and retired volunteers to undertake operational tasks and generate income to fund activities affected the ability of Sheds to sustain and develop. Shed members also did not wish their Sheds to become formal healthcare deliverers, preferring to keep their activities informal and flexible to fit with the needs of their members.

In conclusion, although Sheds are recognised for their health and wellbeing benefits to men, policymakers must recognise that formalising their activities might detract from the Shed's primary aims. Therefore, there must be a consideration of tensions that exist in placing expectations of Sheds to expand their remit and formalise into service delivery.

**Dr Danielle Hutcheon (nee Kelly)**  
Yunus Centre for Social Business and Health  
Glasgow Caledonian University





# SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT



***Christmas certainly came early for the Shedders of Garnock Valley Men's Shed (GVMS) as they watched the North Ayrshire Council Cabinet meeting live online as their Shed's transfer of ownership and a 25-year lease was unanimously agreed.***

The Scottish Shedder got in touch with David Gardner, Vice-Chair of GVMS and Chairman of the SMSA, who has been involved in the Shed since day one, to hear all about it and what their Shedders have been up to of late.

David said: "We are absolutely delighted to have secured this long-term lease (at £400 per annum—5% of the normal annual fee) and indebted to the Council for its ongoing support for our Shed. This Community Asset Transfer will afford the opportunity for us to not only continue to develop and improve the facilities, without the pressure of high rent, but also allow us to focus on and meet the needs of our growing membership for many years to come.

"It was fantastic to watch the Cabinet meeting online on the 8<sup>th</sup> December where it was evident that the benefits of Sheds were fully understood and the proposal sailed through. Our Shed was praised for the work already carried out on the building—which had been declared surplus to service requirements—and for the difference we are making to the lives of people in our community. We were thrilled to hear Councillor Louise McPhater, Cabinet Member for Communities, express at the meeting that ***'This is community empowerment in action and gives meaningful power and resources to local groups that are making a real difference in our communities.'***"

When asked about the background story to GVMS, David said: "We had our first public meeting in November 2017 to gauge interest in setting up a Men's Shed in our community. The inaugural meeting was arranged by

Project Kilbirnie and North Ayrshire Council and there was a good buzz at that meeting. A steering committee was then formed and we started meeting in a local community centre.

"In February 2018, we attended an excellent training day organised by Stewart Beck, Community Education Officer at North Ayrshire Council who has been instrumental in our Shed's success from the outset. The training was delivered by Jason Schroeder (Executive Officer of the SMSA) to existing and developing Sheds from the surrounding area including Kilmarnock, Inverclyde, Irvine Newtown and Three Towns (Saltcoats, Stevenston & Ardrossan).

"From that event, we came away extremely enthusiastic and motivated to set up our Shed. We took over the derelict building we are in now - situated in the former cleansing and grounds maintenance depot within Kilbirnie Public Park on Ladysmith Road, Kilbirnie. Initially, we had no running water, no toilet, a leaky roof and were on a temporary occupation license and over the last two years have made vast improvements to transform the building to meet our needs.

"Over time, our membership grew to 80 members (30 active) and we diversified to offer a range of activities including music room, bike repairs and added a dedicated scale-modelling room. We opened two days a week; every Tuesday and Thursday (10am to 4pm) and on a Wednesday evening (6-8pm) for the Modelling group.

"Over the years, we have been supported by many funders and through donations. We are thankful to each and every one of them including Barr Environmental, Screwfix and the Asda Foundation. We have been gifted materials from organisations like Jewson and B&Q and just simply couldn't do what we do without this support.

*Continued on next page...*





# SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT (CONTINUED)

...continued from previous page

"Recent improvements to the Shed include the installation of our new four-panel patio doors to improve our reception area (pictured) which were supplied free of charge by **Andrew Wright Windows** and fitted by three of our Shedders in lockdown. Andrew Wright also supplied and fitted two new windows to our kitchen.

"In lockdown, we had one member at a time volunteer to go check on the Shed. We have had a leaky roof over our main workshop since we moved in and as we neared the winter months, this became more and more of a concern. Our Shed had fundraised £17,000 for priority roof repairs – through North Ayrshire Council, the Co-op Local Community Fund and the Dalry Parish Boundary Trust – and decided to carry out this work in September while the Shed was closed and we are delighted to say that our premises are now fully wind and water tight ready for our members to return one day.

"During the course of the pandemic, we adapted to reach out and connect in new ways. Our Shed Manager, Fred Brown, has been the key driving force to this and through our GVMS Modeller's Club, funded by Foundation Scotland's Response Fund, he has ensured that 40 self-isolating people received a variety of model kits and tools to do from home. The club has an active group operating online – through Facebook, Zoom and YouTube – providing tutorials and plenty of opportunities to connect socially. Models 4 Heroes also recently paid for Fred to achieve his First Aid Mental Health Level 3 certification to further support our members. Our Board has also met fortnightly on Zoom to coordinate Shed business and the building works.

"Our Shed became a partner in the **Connecting Scotland** programme to receive devices to distribute to people who did not have the confidence, equipment or connectivity to get online. We have been overwhelmed with the difference this has made to people's lives during the course of the pandemic – keeping them connected with their friends and family, informed and entertained, able to learn, work, shop as well as access health information online.

"One great example of partnership working at its best was when SMSA was approached by a lady (see page 6 for Tracy Wallace's story) regarding her father living in Beith—a small town situated in Garnock Valley. The lady was asking for help to get her father (76) – who has a visual

impairment amongst other health conditions and was suffering from loneliness and isolation – some equipment to get online as she was unable to visit her parents due to COVID-19 restrictions. SMSA reached out to GVMS and Stewart Beck of North Ayrshire Council to help the family and we are delighted to report that her father received the equipment he required and the family were video calling on Christmas day and her father has since become a member of our Shed!

"At Christmas, we held a Christmas Extravaganza online event—funded by The Scottish Learning Partnership—for our members consisting of some quizzes, great banter and a goodie bag (pictured) was delivered to participating Shedders' homes. The goodie bag was a great addition to this experience – members received a Shed branded hat and mask, a Christmas card and prizes, a list of useful resources and helplines and everyone had a terrific time.

"The most rewarding part of being involved with a Men's Shed for me personally is how we are helping people and changing lives. One day, a Shedder came to speak to me saying that he had some bad news and had recently received a cancer diagnosis. I opened up to him on my own four-year journey with prostate cancer and explained the support available, potential avenues and next steps to discuss with his family. To me, this is what Sheds are all about – men coming together to talk whether it is banter in the kitchen or health advice, we are there for each other.

"There are so many positive stories that I could share on the impact the Shed has made to people's lives and give them meaningful purpose. Another Shedder that comes to mind was given some additional responsibility at the Shed and I will always remember his response, '**You have no idea what this has done for me, finally someone trusts me.**' I get so much out of our time at the Shed seeing men come out of their shells and thrive making positive contributions to their society.

"We are helping people every day. I often see men that are reticent about engaging in their community and not long after joining, then see them laughing and joking around in our social area and sharing life experiences. I said before the Shed opened that if we can help just one person then it is all worthwhile.

"At the moment, GVMS's doors remain firmly shut and have done since March 2020. The plan is to just keep on doing what we are doing until we can reopen safely and we



are fully confident to do so. Our Shedders are keeping in touch and we have a wealth of online activities to keep everyone busy and entertained.

"In the meantime, our future plans include saving money on our Shed's energy bills. We looked into a biomass system but this option was far too expensive – and not economical with only being open two days a week normally – so we are now exploring a state-of-the-art electric eco system which would only heat the Shed automatically (using sensors) on the days we are open. Now that we have secured our CAT, we can turn our full attention to projects like this and the growth of our Shed activities.

For more information, follow **GVMS** at [www.facebook.com/GVMShed](https://www.facebook.com/GVMShed) and the Modellers Club at [www.facebook.com/GVMS.Modellers](https://www.facebook.com/GVMS.Modellers)

## Kirkmuirhill and Blackwood Shedders take to the great outdoors

Kirkmuirhill and Blackwood Men's Shed (KBMS) continues working towards the day that its Shed can safely reopen again.

Alan Watson, Chair of KBMS, said: "Following a successful fundraising event—a Race Night in early March 2020—we closed our doors due to the pandemic. All of our plans were put on the back burner as the priority was, of course, the safety of the Shedders. This time afforded us the opportunity to work on our to-do list and one very important task at hand was the production of an information leaflet to promote the Shed around the local villages.

"We are delighted that this has now been achieved with the help of [Seniors Together](#) and the South Lanarkshire Council Graphics Team. We are now prepared to do a mail drop to every house in our local community when measures ease to reach and attract new members.

"One of our activities that was put on hold was our Walking Tours around our village. We noticed a Facebook post about an online event, organised by Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire (VASLAN), which could potentially help us to get going with this project again.

"We were advised during a Zoom meeting, facilitated by Getting Outdoors Lanarkshire, about the recommendations for running walks.

**"Literally, this was the breath of fresh air we all needed."**

We looked into it, researching the recommended websites, and just a few weeks later, we were contacted by Blackwood Estate Community Association. The Association was in receipt of 420 trees from the Woodlands Trust which required planting alongside a path used by the local community.

"That got me thinking. I had been made aware that health walks were exempt from local restrictions, as long as physical distancing was observed. So, we got to work and planned and advertised two Sundays with morning and afternoon sessions to maximise the amount of people we could safely involve.



"Despite December's weather, the event still went ahead. After a short walk, we were given the trees to plant in an allocated area and after a few hours the task was complete.

"This project gave us the opportunity to meet as a group and get some exercise after a long time in lockdown. Literally, this was the breath of fresh air we all needed.

"Although Sheds still remain closed, we are still progressing with plans in the background to prepare for our return. We have recently negotiated the use of a back room—with the help of Thornton Road Community Centre Association—to enable us to reconfigure the workshop to allow for physical distancing. Stay Safe everyone."

For more information on KBMS, please visit [www.facebook.com/groups/1765638216876323](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1765638216876323)

## Getting Dad Connected



"My family was delighted to receive an iPad through Garnock Valley Men's Shed for my dad to use (see [GVMS's 'Shed in the Spotlight' on page 4&5](#)). My dad's mental health, motivation and mobility have all suffered during the pandemic and I am delighted that he is now engaging with his new equipment as part of the [Connecting Scotland](#) initiative.

"My dad has started to send me a daily text message and is enjoying watching sports online. He is slowly learning but to be honest, I never thought he would even entertain my suggestion to ask for support. He has a visual impairment but, using this new equipment, he can now actually see family members' faces on video calls. The iPad has given us all great entertainment, thank you. Next step... Zoom!"

**Connecting Scotland – supporting everyone in Scotland to get online**

[www.connecting.scot](http://www.connecting.scot)

## Your Issue, Your Voice



The Scottish Older People's Assembly (SOPA) exists to give a strong voice to older people about their experience of life in Scotland, their challenges and concerns, and to celebrate the positive contribution that older people make to society.

Your Issue, Your Voice is the series of information sheets from SOPA which aim to support older people to have their say, with information on where and how to raise issues, along with tips from our members.

The information sheets (at the links below) are available in print-at-home version:

- ⇒ [Information Sheet 1: Introduction](#)
- ⇒ [Information Sheet 2: Who to influence](#)
- ⇒ [Information Sheet 3: How to develop a campaign](#)
- ⇒ [Information Sheet 4: Ensuring your message is inclusive](#)

[www.scotopa.org.uk](http://www.scotopa.org.uk)



## South Lanarkshire Shedders' winter weather support

The Safer South Lanarkshire's Unintentional Injuries Sub-Group is ensuring its communities and local Shedders stay safe on their feet this winter through its Salt Sticks project.

The project, now in its second year of funding, involves the purchase and distribution of Salt Sticks (a fast-acting salt solution) across South Lanarkshire to communities to enable them to thaw paths, roads, driveways, car parks and stairs.

The refillable, recyclable, resealable and reusable Winter Wizard Salt Stick (pictured) is over 1 metre in length and gives accurate spreading and lasts longer than regular rock salt. The de-icer also benefits from being harmless to animals therefore safe to be spread where animals and wildlife are present.

Christine Calder, Project Manager at Seniors Together (a partner organisation of the Safer South Lanarkshire's Unintentional Injuries Sub-Group), said: "The Unintentional Injuries Sub-Group is made up of a range of public, third sector and first responder organisations which have a specific remit of assisting in preventing injuries in older adults.

"The project exists to encourage people to take as many precautions as possible to stay safe and be able to leave their home for essentials during the winter months. With the South Lanarkshire Shed Network being one of the groups supported by Seniors Together, all of our Shed members were gifted a Salt Stick."



Tom Kennedy, Treasurer of [Carluke Men's Shed](#), said: "When we are hit with freezing temperatures, many people—especially older people and people with mobility issues—are often housebound as they cannot safely get out for essential shopping and/or to collect prescriptions for fear of falling and injuring themselves.

"Severe weather was forecast in late December so I offered to take delivery of a batch of 50 Salt Sticks at my home to ensure they were distributed to our Shedders before the impending snow hit. Myself, Eddie Lucas and Mark Ingram from our Shed took them to Shedders' homes and two local churches—to be given to vulnerable members—two days before Christmas.

"We are very much aware of how treating and clearing icy pavements will prevent more admissions to our local hospitals with the NHS already stretched during these difficult times. This project is vital to ensure our communities are able to make essential journeys safely and may be an avenue that other Sheds wish to explore and support in their own areas."

**The Safer South Lanarkshire's Unintentional Injuries Sub-Group consists of:** Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Police Scotland, South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) Social Work Resources, SLC Housing and Technical Resources, Care and Repair South Lanarkshire, NHS Lanarkshire, SLC Education, SLC Seniors Together, Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire, Scottish Ambulance Service and Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents

## Banchory and District Men's Shed repurpose old laptops

[Banchory and District Men's Shed](#) shares details of their latest project of transforming old laptops to enable non-tech-savvy Shedders the opportunity to connect online and combat social isolation.

Shed Cairman, Paul Evans, said: "A member told us about a friend of his, aged 95, who would like to join our weekly Zoom meetings. He had an iPad but couldn't find it and had no IT skills. Our Shed decided to come up with a simple digital solution to ensure everyone was able to join our meetings and feel connected online whilst Sheds are closed."

Paul added: "We decided to take old donated laptops; wipe them; install Linux and Zoom; and configure them to start automatically when the power is switched on to allow anyone to join in remote sessions without any technical assistance.

"The advantages of doing it this way are that many people have old laptops that they are willing to donate to a good cause and most laptops have built-in camera, microphone and speakers. The software downloads (Linux and Zoom) are all free or have free versions that are adequate for the purpose. Data privacy issues are avoided and malware risk is low because there is no personal data on the laptop to protect."

- 1) On a donated laptop, install [Linux Mint](#) (free)
- 2) Installation deletes all existing programs and data on the laptop but if you have concerns about possible residual information on the disk, you can free space and swap file using Software Manager to install secure-delete
- 3) Install [Zoom for Linux](#) (free)
- 4) In system settings, Startup Applications, press +, Custom Command, and enter the command Firefox [url as shown in the Zoom invitation] in the "Command" box, then press Add
- 5) Power off the laptop, power on again, and agree to all prompts. After a while (depending on the speed of the laptop), Zoom will open in the meeting that you have specified
- 6) Power off and power on again, to verify that the Zoom meeting opens correctly without further intervention



**NOTE:** The laptop requires an internet connection to join online meetings. Risk would be increased if the laptop is used for internet browsing or email

## Nairn Men's Shed's secures new platform to reach even more Shedders

Nairn Men's Shed (NMS) has signed an extended lease in December to double its space with the addition of the old waiting room on the North Platform at Nairn's railway station.

The group acquired its existing Station Building Shed on Cawdor Street, on the opposite (South side) platform, in 2017 for a peppercorn rent from Scotrail and has transformed the former florist building into what they have today including a well-stocked workshop and popular arts group.

Their membership has grown significantly from six to 30+ active members. NMS has secured vital funds through the Railway Heritage Trust to transform the new facility at the Victorian railway by installing new lighting, a kitchen and new toilet for its growing membership when they are able to open their doors again.

NMS Chair, John Rushforth, said: "This is a huge step forward for our Shed however, due to COVID-19 restrictions, it is unfortunately not full steam ahead.

"Whilst this expansion project will enable us to create additional social space—and offer even more activities to our members and ultimately attract more Shedders—it is extremely frustrating to not be able to get back to Shed business and start using the premises and funding.

"The new premises mean so much to our members and there is just so much potential—we are champing at the bit to get back.

"Before the virus called a halt to things, we were happily carrying out a range of exciting community projects including picnic tables for a community orchard, planters for the station, storage units for a local Alzheimer day centre and re-roofing a nursery building.

"Sheds are all about working 'shoulder to shoulder' and reducing social isolation and loneliness and this virus is the complete opposite.

"Even in lockdown, I have been contacted by potential new members or people reaching out for support for an isolated family member or friend. We want to be ready to welcome them and delighted to be able to offer the additional space when the time is right.

"Our members are eagerly awaiting the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions to enable us to transform this new space which has lain empty for many years."

The Nairn Shedders have been meeting online weekly through Zoom every Wednesday at 11am and invite others to join them at [shorturl.at/tGMXY](https://shorturl.at/tGMXY)

For more information on Nairn Men's Shed, email [nairnmensshed@gmail.com](mailto:nairnmensshed@gmail.com) or follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/NairnMensShed](https://www.facebook.com/NairnMensShed)





## Black Isle Shedders jump on the trike bandwagon

Black Isle Men's Shed has put the wheels in motion to offer electric trike rides to members of its community when conditions allow.

Lockdown has seen a huge surge in demand for bicycles, e-scooters and electric bikes and now the Ross-shire Shedders are 'jumping on the bandwagon' with its trishaw ride offering.

The 'trishaw', named after its resemblance to a trike and rickshaw, will offer much-needed respite for local older people and people with mobility issues to get out and about for some fresh Scottish Highlands air with a trained rider, or 'pilot'.

Abiding by COVID-19 guidelines and working within family bubbles, BIMS Shedders have trialed the project using a borrowed electric bike which has been previously used to take less able people out in Inverness and have trips down to Chanonry Point and Rosemarkie beach.

BIMS Chairman, Steve Bramwell (pictured right in blue jacket), said: "Our community will see us out on our own or with passengers 'in training'. Our passengers will always be family members in a 'bubble' - adhering strictly to the Scottish Government rules in place. We are a small group of Shedders who are practicing now so that we can instruct volunteer pilots as and when the project takes off.

"The project is still very much in the early stages. We are currently looking at funding sources and interested in meeting people who might like to be part of this community-run project.

"We got this idea from the successful project in Cromarty and think it will be particularly well-received in Fortrose and Rosemarkie especially with the new care home opening soon.

For more information on Black Isle Men's Shed, please visit their website at [www.bimshed.uk](http://www.bimshed.uk) and follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/groups/BlackIsleMensShed](https://www.facebook.com/groups/BlackIsleMensShed)



**Pictured (top to bottom):**  
Richard Cherry and Steve Bramwell with 'pilot' Lesley Clunas; and Steve Bramwell, BIMS Chairman, in training



## Construction well under way at Inverurie & District Men's Shed's Horticultural Centre

Members of the Inverurie & District Men's Shed (IDMS) gathered in October 2020 to start the big dig to prepare the ground at their new allotment site at Souterford.

Members Douglas Scott and Bob Shepherd put on a show with their vintage tractors (pictured right) - a grey Ferguson and a Ford Dexter - breaking up and ploughing the ground at the plot.

The site will have 22 allotments available to the public and seven allocated to the Shed.

IDMS has received a wealth of support for the project from various funders, local companies and individuals including:

- a £6,950 grant from Aberdeenshire Council's Garioch Area Committee
- £1,000 from the Barratt Homes North Scotland Community Fund
- a £300 donation from Inverurie Rotary Club
- a £250 donation from Tim Purves and Colin Brown of Eric P Massie, Funeral Directors
- installation of a second-hand 40ft shipping container with delivery being given free of charge by Wm and D Murray Haulage Ltd of Kintore
- transportation of the polytunnel frame and summer house from Harlaw Way to the new site at Old Port Road by Brian Poppe of I&K Motors in Inverurie
- the donation of a gate (pictured inset) from Steven Wood of Inverurie Light Fabrication
- a £500 donation from William Bird on behalf of the Fennel Restaurant in Inverurie
- an allotment sign donated by Rood Signs in Inverurie (pictured right)
- the donation and delivery of four tanks from Inverurie farmer, Roy Mitchell to store the water pumped from the River Urie for the allotment area (picture bottom right)

Chairman, Archie Peebles, said: "We are extremely grateful for all the assistance so far particularly the efforts of Alan Smart, Bill Stewart, Douglas Scott, Graeme Shepherd, Henry Wilson, Jim Bruce, Murray Main, Robert Shepherd and Stuart Shepherd.

"We are very much looking forward to the warmer weather and opening in Spring 2021!"



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



## Free IT Support from AbilityNet

AbilityNet is a UK charity that provides free IT support to older people and disabled people to assist them to use technology in order to achieve their goals. The charity has a network of around 300 UK volunteers—50 in Scotland—who can support most computer systems and tech devices.

With so many older and disabled people isolated due to lockdown—and need to access technology in order to keep connected, arrange GP appointments, shop online etc—it is really important to AbilityNet to raise as much awareness as possible, so that their ITCanHelp volunteers can provide support to those that need it and help them to stay safe online.



AbilityNet also helps individuals to source, and use, suitable adaptive software and hardware (although they do not fund the purchase of adaptive technology itself). Recently, they have directly supported older clients with advice on buying and setting up devices to stay connected to family, access online appointments and to shop online safely.

## Scam Awareness Zoom Meetings for Sheds

AbilityNet has also been running Scam Awareness Zoom meeting for charities, care homes, Scottish Women's Institutes, Men's Sheds and other community groups. If your Shedders could benefit from learning more about how to stay safe online and avoid scams at one of your Shed's upcoming Zoom meetings, please get in touch with AbilityNet for support:

- Complete the form online at: <https://abilitynet.org.uk/at-home/request-free-it-support-home#home-visit-request>
- Call their helpline: 0800 048 7642
- Email AbilityNet at: [enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk)



**Simon Brodie**  
AbilityNet County Coordinator  
for Grampian, Tayside, Orkney,  
and Shetland and Member of  
Orkney Men's Shed

"As a member of the Orkney Men's Shed, having access to technology during lockdown has been vital for our members to stay in touch with each other.

"Our Shedders identified that they deeply missed the camaraderie of the Shed and that being able to keep in touch online makes a huge difference to their wellbeing. We recently held a 'Tea Break' over Zoom and members logged in with a brew in hand and chatted for a couple of hours—exactly the same as we would have done if we were in the social area of our Shed.

"Being safe online is about understanding the risks associated with these activities. You wouldn't hand over cash to a stranger that turned up on your doorstep claiming to be collecting a payment on behalf of your bank, and you shouldn't hand over bank details to a stranger who has written you an email online. Online scams are specifically designed to pressure you into acting quickly before having a chance to think and say 'hold on, I think I should check this out before I do anything.'

"Always go to your bank's website from your browser or call them from a number on your bank statement and don't click on links in suspicious emails or use the numbers on the email.

"I recently supported an older gentleman learning how to use a computer tablet for the first time. Part of that was about showing him how the device is just a tool to let him do the things he liked doing, but online rather than face-to-face. So in this case he enjoyed reading book and learning about ships. I was able to show him safe ways to find books to read for free online and safe websites to visit where he could learn about ships, and even websites where he could sit and track ships, in real-time, as they sailed around the globe. All while building his confidence in being safe online and also showing him that a computer is a tool to make his life easier, rather than something he felt he was forced to have to use. Oh...and of course, I also chased up his nearest Men's Shed and pointed him towards that too!"

## Support for Sheds from Balfour Beatty

When Breadalbane Men's Shed got in touch to let us know about the materials they had received from leading international infrastructure group, Balfour Beatty—SMSA just had to find out more.

Duncan Gardner, Community Benefits Advisor at Balfour Beatty said: "Working sustainably is at the heart of what we do. One way to reduce the impact of the works on the environment at our sites is to manage waste effectively in accordance with the Reduce, Reuse, Recycle ethos.

"Huge volumes of waste materials are reused as part of the construction and our team has also developed a new initiative to encourage local recycling. A community waste collection point has been established at many of our project locations in a bid to give materials back to the community to be reused and recycled such as wooden pallets, wood offcuts, cable reels, drainage pipe offcuts and more."

"Whilst this remaining material is of no use to the construction, it can be extremely valuable to many local groups. I have worked with many Men's Sheds across Scotland over the last few years and had the pleasure of working with the Sheds in Stonehaven and Portlethen to donate materials from the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route project and more recently, Breadalbane Men's Shed came to site in September 2020 to collect some wood and pipe offcuts to use in their local projects (pictured top right). We are delighted to see these materials be reused by local groups and happy to see it go to a good home with the Men's Sheds."

Bob Howie from Breadalbane Men's Shed said: "Our Shed received some twin-walled pipe and wood for a few projects including making an electrolysis bath and a work bench. The pipe is great for shrubs and can be cut, painted and placed at a convenient height for disabled gardeners. The pipe helps restrict the size the shrub can grow to as it contains the root system. Balfour Beatty gave us free rein of what we could take. We have limited storage in our Shed but will definitely be returning for more materials for more projects. Other Sheds local to their sites could also possibly benefit from their generosity."

In 2019, Balfour Beatty also sent a team of volunteers to help Stanley Men's Shed with their [community orchard at Stanley Mills](#) (pictured above—middle and bottom). Progress at the orchard had stalled due to the requirement to test the soil for pollutants and the project team got involved to collect soil samples for laboratory testing as well as donate tree stakes and protective sleeves for the planting phase.

If your Shed is interested in connecting with your regional Balfour Beatty to see if they can offer you support, please email their shared inbox at [community.engagement@balfourbeatty.com](mailto:community.engagement@balfourbeatty.com)

## Stonehaven Shedders partner up to renovate bikes for local children

During the pandemic, two members of Stonehaven and District Men's Shed (SDMS) got involved in a bike restoration programme to raise much-needed funds to support the Shed's operation. Treasurer Tom Hannan sourced the "preloved bikes"—some donated and some rescued—and the Shed's in-house qualified bike mechanic, Peter Cooper, gave them a new lease of life working from home in his garage.

Over the last nine months, the initiative has raised over £3,000 of vital revenue for the Shed. Following on from success of this bike restoration work, the Shedders joined forces with the Stonehaven and District Lions Club to donate bikes to families in need of a helping hand at Christmas time.

Chairman Bill Allan said "This was a decision, by the guys, to get involved in this very worthwhile cause. The idea came from our fellow Shed, Kinross and District Men's Shed.

"To be able to give a bike to a needy family for their child at Christmas is something we all wanted to be part of. A dozen renovated bikes were handed over to the children's charity Barnardo's, and to Home-Start Kincardine for local distribution to families and children



**Pictured (left to right):** Janice Langdon (Stonehaven and District Lions Club), Peter Cooper (SDMS), Loraine Cran (Barnardo's) and Julie Lindeman (Lions) at the bike handover

in care. We are grateful to those generous people in the community and to our members who gave their time, effort and experience to spruce up the bikes and make them road safe."

For more information on SDMS, please visit [www.stonehavenmensshed.co.uk](http://www.stonehavenmensshed.co.uk) and follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/Stonehaven-Mens-Shed-1095753717148589](https://www.facebook.com/Stonehaven-Mens-Shed-1095753717148589)



## Wee County Men's Shed trials 'Bring Your Own' Café venture to stay connected

Wee County Men's Shed (WCMS) Chairman and SMSA Treasurer, Jon Searle, talks to SMSA about the Shed's 'Bring Your Own' Café project to ensure its Shedders stay safely connected during the course of the pandemic.

Jon said: "Like most Sheds across Scotland, our Shed shut its doors at the start of lockdown and still remains closed to date.

"Before lockdown, we had been working on our new social area known as 'The Howf'. Our previous social area was simply not big enough and did not meet the needs of our growing membership and we successfully secured monies from The Robertson Trust and The National Lottery Community Fund to improve the facility."

"We proceeded to knock down the old building and custom-build a new self-contained social area. The downside of this was having no social area for a time but we knew that the end result would certainly make it all worthwhile. WCMS installed a disabled toilet, new kitchen units and new social area space. The project was nearing completion when lockdown hit us all and we had to close our doors on the 18th March 2020.

"Over time, we put together a social bubble of guys to finish off the Howf project safely on a rota basis. Our Shed became part of SMSA's Pathfindr trial and received ten Safe Distancing Assistant devices (pictured right) to enable the men to complete the works whilst maintaining a safe 2m distance.

"Our Shed workshop has remained closed and we have received a few requests for it to open for project work however it became clear that there was a greater demand from members to open the Howf to enable our Shedders to socialise once again over a cuppa. There was a need for them to reconnect in person, albeit physically distanced.

"After leaving the Shed one day to meet up with my wife at a local Café, an idea came to me. I looked around the Café and spoke to the manager about their safety measures in place and thought to myself—could we utilise our new social space, under COVID-19 regulations, to enable our Shedders to meet again as a Café?

"I spoke to several organisations (Environmental Health, Police Scotland,

the NHS and our insurance company) about the concept and with the recommendation that the Café only ran as a 'bring your own' function—where users brought their own cups, flasks, snacks and took the items away with them—it was approved unanimously that we could open as long as we followed strict COVID-19 measures.

"We got to work to make the room COVID-19 compliant and implemented, amongst other things, a one-way system; a signing in and out track and trace process; a thermometer for taking temperatures of members before entering the facility; COVID-19 signage; sourced new easy-to-clean and wipeable furniture; laid out the room to meet the 2m requirements and set a maximum limit of 6-8 people at any one time.

"We also painted a red floor in the kitchen area. This is to not only warn people that they are close to potentially hot items but also a reminder that only two people can use the kitchen area at one time.

"Members must maintain a 2m distance at all times and must wear masks except when seated and drinking their tea or coffee.

"For those members that wanted to or had to stay at home, we applied to and received funding through the Ideas, Innovation, Improvement Fund through Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface to purchase a large wall-mounted TV, webcam and laptop (pictured right) dedicated to broadcasting a live Zoom meeting direct from the Howf Café as a virtual Shed. This enabled those members to log in from home and see what was happening in the Shed and talk to their fellow Shedders.

"We had two test openings just before Christmas that went very well. There were two learning curves gained from this trial—one is to purchase another webcam that will accommodate a wider angle to show the full area (we will use the original webcam for security of the Shed down the line) and two was to number the Pathfindr devices when we allocate them to keep a track of them.

"We closed the Café for Christmas and then lockdown hit again in the New Year. We are closed for the foreseeable future which is disheartening but we are still full of hope for the future now our social area is finished and is ready to greet members when we are permitted to do so."

For the latest updates from WCMS, follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/theweecountymensshed](https://www.facebook.com/theweecountymensshed)

If you wish to join WCMS's Zoom meetings which take place every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10am - 2pm, please [click here](#) (Meeting ID: 791 3423 1224; Passcode: WCMS)



## Alford and District Men's Shed receives green cash boosts

Alford and District Men's Shed (ADMS) has received several cash boosts aimed at tackling climate change and boosting Scotland's green recovery from the pandemic.

Bill Slee, ADMS Trustee, said: "We have made and continue to make strenuous efforts to make our Shed one of the greenest in Scotland.

"We have made major changes to the thermal properties of the building with new double-glazed windows (pictured top right), LED lights and a new better-insulated roof with help from the Keep Scotland Beautiful [Climate Challenge Fund](#). The same funding also allowed us to put up a large polytunnel and develop a community orchard and allotments.

"Having recently received an [Enablement Grant from Local Energy Scotland](#) (LES), we are currently working with an [Innovation Grant from LES](#) to decarbonise our heating system. This project is also being supported by the [Vattenfall 'Unlock](#)

[our Future' fund](#), which is the community component of the offshore windfarm just north of Aberdeen.

"We are putting Photovoltaic (PV) solar energy from the roof (which was put up with loan finance from two members of the Shed) into a thermal tank and battery storage and are hoping to put in a heat pump. This will help the Shed to move to a net zero target.

"The application to the [Community Climate Asset Fund](#) was to get electric bikes and trailers to move further with our low carbon project. We want to use them to demonstrate that electric bikes are a viable alternative to short car journeys; and with panniers and trailers can be used for shopping and local recreational trips.

"Graeme Barber, the village butcher, will trial the bike for home deliveries and the local library will test the bikes for home delivery of books to housebound library users, when it reopens after lockdown. We hope that by giving people the opportunity to try an e-bike, it will trigger a purchase and get some of the Shedders and wider local community interested in e-bikes.

"There is good evidence that short (and unnecessary) local car journeys use a lot of fuel, and with e-bikes we can potentially displace a proportion of these journeys.



"Several of our members already use an e-bike to come to the Shed and we hope that with our three new bikes, two trailers and safety helmets (owned by the Shed and made available for trials) that we can raise more interest in using them as a sustainable form of getting around.

"We are enormously grateful to all of the funders who have made these projects possible and to a hard-working band of Shedders who—when we have not been in lockdown—have been able to do a fair bit of the work to make the Shed more sustainable while leaving the big tasks to be undertaken by local tradesmen."

For more information on ADMS, please follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/groups/alfordmensshed](https://www.facebook.com/groups/alfordmensshed)



## Say no to the age gap and get involved in National Intergenerational Week!

National Intergenerational Week, in its second year, takes place from the 8th-14th March 2021.

- Are you passionate about connecting generations?
- Do you have an inspiring intergenerational story or idea?
- Do you run or know of an amazing intergenerational project in your area?
- Do you have plans to build an intergenerational community?
- Then, get involved in [#IntergenerationalWeek](#)!

The aim is to get as many people as possible across the UK involved and talking about how they plan to connect younger and older generations to build strong connections and friendships.

1. Share your intergenerational project or those local to you with the online world during [#IntergenerationalWeek](#), 8th – 14th March 2021
2. Show your support for all things intergenerational by **adding your logo to the website**. Logos should be emailed to [Denise Yap](#)
3. Share your top ideas for supporting intergenerational connections during and post COVID-19. Skype sessions and emails, phone calls, and Facebook. Pop them in an email to [Denise Yap](#) and use our hashtag [#IntergenerationalWeek](#) to tweet. They will gather them together and use the campaign week to help spread the word!

For more information and to download their social media pack, please visit:

<https://generationsworkingtogether.org/national-intergenerational-week>







## Wise old men plant trees that bear fruit for their grandchildren to eat

The pandemic may have delayed progress on Stanley and District Men's Shed's latest fruitful project but its Shedders were determined to unite, at a safe distance, to see phase one come to fruition.

The Shedders gathered at their new community orchard—which has been two years in the making—to plant their first batch of 15 traditional indigenous British fruit trees.

Alex Cockburn, Chairman, said: "The orchard—located within the grounds of Stanley Mills on land leased from Historic Environment Scotland—has received overwhelming support from the community and local companies.

"British infrastructure group, Balfour Beatty, provided a team of their staff to assist with the soil sampling which had to be carried out before the land was passed as suitable for planting in addition to donating the support stakes for the trees.

"Hedging was planted in September with plants from the Woodland Trust and the Appletreeman (Andrew Lear) provided the fruit trees.



"To facilitate pollination, we also set up our first bee hive and trained two Shedders to look after it and enjoyed our first taste of honey from the hive in September (pictured left). The bee enclosure was made from an old shed with a handy window for kids to view the bees' activities (pictured below left).

"Our Shed has been meeting online twice a week—every Tuesday and Thursday from 10am— on Zoom to keep in touch but it was fantastic to be together in the orchard again, albeit from a distance.

"It was great working out the plans of where the trees would go, digging the holes and making sure the posts were well grounded to support the trees so that they are here to bear fruit for many generations to come.

"Soon, we will move on to Phase two which will include the planting of a further 55 trees. Each of the trees have been sponsored by the men themselves and other members of the Stanley and District community."

For more information on Stanley and District Men's Shed, please visit [www.stanleymen.org](http://www.stanleymen.org) and follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/stanley.mensshed.1](https://www.facebook.com/stanley.mensshed.1)





# A PERSONAL STORY



Photo courtesy of Ryan D McDonald, photography student

## Richard Potts, Paisley Men's Shed

***Potts by name... and by nature. Richard Potts of Paisley Men's Shed shares a personal snapshot of his community garden design and construction projects since joining the Shed in the summer of 2019.***

Nature-loving Richard retired early, after 25 years as a graphic designer at the University of the West of Scotland, in June 2019 but taking it easy was the last thing on his mind.

Richard said: "I have volunteered for many years and known as a bit of a 'jack of all trades'. I was involved in the university's community garden project, through the Student Association, for four years. Locally, I have got involved in many projects to transform and tidy up my neighbourhood. I care about my area and am out most days tidying up green spaces and just love to share my gardening knowledge and mentor others on growing tips, composting, soil types...you name it!

"One day, I got chatting to one of the Shedders from Paisley Men's Shed and he mentioned that they had a large outdoor space with huge potential and asked if I would be interested in joining. So, the very next day, I went along to the Shed and was delighted to see the space. My first thoughts were that it was perfect for a bog garden! The possibilities were endless—a range of

wildflowers, composting area, seating, trees...my imagination started to run wild.

"The area acts as a soak-away for St Mirren football ground and the wet meadow habitat made it ideal for excavated features such as the five-point star and paisley pattern features (pictured right), the excavated soil has been used to create raised mounds for future planting.

"I joined the Shed in August 2019 and started to knock the space into shape immediately. I began with strimming the area and patterning the banks then planting some wildflowers to attract the bees and butterflies. When some people see wildflowers, they think weeds - but for me, it brings back memories of my childhood and running through them.

"I began planting some trees—saplings of scots pine, birch, spruce and horse chestnut on the banks—in addition to the existing acer, goat willow and red/yellow dogwood. We also planted a 20-year-old pot-bound oak tree grown by my daughter, Victoria. We were looking to rehome the tree and this was just perfect for it. I am also hoping to plant some rowan and alder trees soon once the frost subsides.



*Continued on next page...*



# A PERSONAL STORY

*...continued from previous page*

"The lower wild garden is occupied by goat willow, red dogwood, mosses, soft rush, red clover, lady's mantle, meadowsweet, buttercup, cuckoo flower and various grasses.

"The banks and walkway have knapweed, ragwort, vetch, comfrey, red hawkweed, yellow hawkweed, redshank, plantain and red clover to name but a few. The seed feeder has attracted goldfinch, greenfinch, chaffinch, bullfinch, blue and great tit and even a great spotted woodpecker. A rare Lime Hawkmoth caterpillar was also found under the compost cover. At the entrance area, we have displayed annual and perennial plants and added a tyre and bricks courtesy of fly tippers!

"The project is a work in progress and I am slowly introducing different shrubs (e.g. berries, hawthorns, buddleia etc) and nesting boxes to attract local birds and insects. I have a genuine love of nature and spend most of my time outdoors. The Shed is a 10-minute walk from my home—which I share with my wife, Jacqueline—and it has been great to continue this work when our tier level allowed. I also took on the role as acting custodian to check on things at the Shed.

"Before COVID, I just loved working in the garden with the other Sheddars. This space was just a wasted piece of land and I am immensely proud to develop and improve this 'wet meadow' habitat for local bugs and beasts. I get such a sense of achievement seeing the birds and bees and occasionally, Mr Toad. I am hoping for frogs this year.

"In lockdown, a few of us Sheddars (myself, Frank and Gerry) used some scrap timber to construct nesting boxes and bird tables for local nursing and care homes ([see page 20](#)). We supplied two nesting boxes to the local RSPB reserve which were gratefully received and quickly installed.

"We don't just supply what people want though – we go along, carry out a survey and advise what the birds need. The bird tables are specifically designed to be post or wall-mounted for ideal viewing.

"We have completed several projects that are all ready and waiting to go—and also planters and a bird box for a local nursery—

but lockdown has unfortunately delayed things. The feedback has been great and the residents have been enjoying feeding and watching the birds. If it wasn't for the eagle-eyed Sheddars spotting and transporting the waste wood, there would have been no cost-free nesting boxes or planters. It really is a team effort from our Sheddars.

"I'm a force of nature and nothing will ever stop me doing things in my community. People pass and stop to chat all the time, donate plants and thank me for the work I do which makes it all worthwhile.

"I have so many plans for the garden – additional seating and access to the lower area – however we want to reach a level of stability with the Shed, boost our membership after lockdown, build up our stock of tools and of course, enjoy the garden and the Shed 'shoulder to shoulder' again one day...hopefully soon.

"The Shed has opened up new horizons for me. I am full of civic pride and joining has allowed me to share my passion, skills and knowledge with a great bunch of guys in my community and be a catalyst for change. One of the Sheddars once said to me that he comes along to be entertained by me as he never knows what is going to come out of my mouth next! It is an absolute joy to be a part of this Movement."

For more information on Paisley Men's Shed, which is supported by the STAR project and St Mirren Charitable Foundation, please follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/PMensShed](https://www.facebook.com/PMensShed) and watch their new film at [www.facebook.com/PMensShed/videos/641032310038414](https://www.facebook.com/PMensShed/videos/641032310038414)

**"I'm a force of nature – nothing stops me doing things in my community."**





# SHED PROJECTS

## Latest projects from The Inverclyde Shed's 'Covid Carving Club'

The Inverclyde Shed has been busy beavering away on its latest initiative for its members—a Covid Carving Club!

The popular club—supported by The Corra Foundation and Comic Relief—has a broad cohort of members working away at home and coming together every Friday morning online for a good blether, to swap notes and undertake skills tutorials.

Bruce Newlands said: “The club is led by our Shed Trustee, Barrie Baker who is an experienced carver and he began by handing out carving kits and wood blanks to interested members in order for them to work on a range of carving projects from home.

“The Shed has recently invested in three micro lathes to produce pens, honey drizzlers, dibbers, spoons and other smaller finer items. Plans are afoot to also replace an ageing full size lathe using new Axminster floor standing equipment for safer working to produce table legs and other larger items.”

Check out The Inverclyde Shed's Instagram page for more projects at [www.instagram.com/inverclydeshedder](https://www.instagram.com/inverclydeshedder)



## Zachary's bench

The Inverclyde Shed, at the request of St Joseph's Primary School, has been working on a project for a very special member of their community—Zachary Holleran, who sadly passed away on the 12th June 2020, aged 14.

Bruce said: “It really has been a group effort from our Shed. Using a bench kindly donated by Crawford

Paterson, refurbished by George Banks and with hand carved plaques from our resident wood carver and Trustee Barrie Baker alongside digitally produced motifs from Trustee Laughlan Smith. The bench is intended to recognise and celebrate Zach's love of karate and gaming.”

The bench sits in it's own perennial wildflower meadow that will bloom every spring in the grounds of St Joseph's Primary School.





# SHED PROJECTS

When SMSA got wind of teepees and buses being created by a Scottish Shed, we just had to get in touch to find out more! Pentlands Men's Shed—based in Currie, Midlothian—has been taking time in lockdown to pursue some local community projects with a difference.

John Wilson at Pentlands Men's Shed said: "Our Shed activities are all very informal and fun. There is no pressure to complete tasks as many of our Shed members have led busy working lives and want a slower pace in retirement. Instead, we use the Shed as a meeting place (albeit online at the moment) for Shedders to have a chat, a cup of tea and a bit of banter.

"We discuss DIY projects, share tips and techniques and make small projects for the local community. It was decided at the onset that we would not go down the route of making 'commercial' items for sale but rather get involved in projects that support our community.

"Our teepees (pictured top right) were made for a local primary school. The children will be involved in designing the colour schemes and painting them and the school will investigate the practicality of putting cushions into them for the kids to sit on. The bases are made from recycled/repurposed decking boards mounted upon pallets, while the sides are clad using slats recovered from other old pallets, screwed to timber frames.

"Our benches (pictured right) which also double up as planters have also been made from recycled decking boards, cleaned up and stained. The buses (pictured below) were made for primary schools and the kids just love them. Thankfully, they do not require a Public Service Vehicle operator licence, MOT or road tax to play on them!

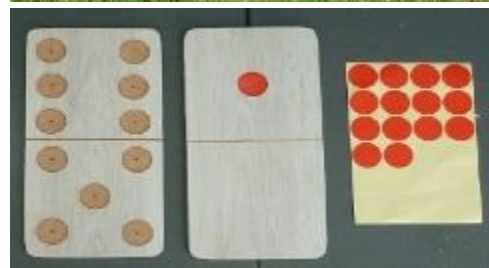
"We have also made sets of large floor dominoes (pictured right) for a local Dementia group and we know how much enjoyment they have had from playing them. The base material is laminate flooring, cut and drilled to suit, then finished with sticky labels to create the dots. Just before Christmas, we were approached and asked to make an outdoor Nativity scene for St Cuthbert's Church in Colinton. The result was very well received (pictured right) although it was commented on that there should have been a donkey! That will be a timely addition for next year, hopefully.

"All of our projects have used donated timber, flooring, pallets, decking etc. We are also very good at just asking around and doing a bit of scrounging! It's amazing what people will give you if you just ask nicely.

"In pre-Covid days, we would meet on a Friday morning for a couple of hours but sadly, as more and more restrictions have been put in place, we had to resort to working in small physically-distanced groups in the Scout hall grounds. Latterly, we have not even been able to do that. Members are currently doing their own thing at home—and partaking in our weekly Zoom meetings and enjoying our regular weekly email update from our Chairman, Alistair Skinner—with all of us hoping for a speedy return to normality soon.

"In early 2019, our Shed was fortunate enough to have been given a small room at the Currie 42nd Scouts Group Hall to hold our weekly meetings and it is now our intention to expand into the Scout hall grounds over time and will keep you all updated on our progress in the coming months!"

For more information on Pentlands Men's Sheds and to see their latest creations, check out their website (created by member, Iain Millar) at <https://pentlandsmensshed.org>





# SHED PROJECTS

## Memorial plaque honours beloved Inverclyde community nurse

A beautiful memorial plaque has been created by Inverclyde Shed to remember the kindness and compassion of a local community nurse that passed away, due to COVID-19, in April 2020.

The poignant piece, made from oak and engraved with a special message, was made to remember Janice Graham (58), an Inverclyde Health Care Support Worker and District Nurse and the first Scottish NHS worker to die of COVID-19.

Bruce Newlands of Inverclyde Shed said: "This was a very important project for us to be involved in—to pay tribute to the contribution and sacrifices made by Janice and all of our keyworkers during the course of this pandemic.

"The plaque will be displayed at the seating spaces in the quiet courtyard garden of the new health centre in Trafalgar Street in Greenock, just round the corner from our Captain Street premises.

"Inverclyde Shed could not have delivered on this project without our new digital Shed (pictured right). We also want to thank member Laughlan Smith for putting in the hours to create such a unique piece in Janice's memory."

To keep up-to-date with Inverclyde Shed's latest news, visit their website at [www.inverclydeshed.co.uk](http://www.inverclydeshed.co.uk) or follow them on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and/or [Pinterest](#).

For more information on Inverclyde Shed's Digital Shed, please visit [www.inverclydeshed.co.uk/digital](http://www.inverclydeshed.co.uk/digital)



## Paisley Men's Shed receives donation to build community bird tables and boxes remotely

Thanks to a £1,850 donation from the Paisley Hammermen Society, Paisley Men's Shed purchased tools and materials to enable some of its members to work remotely to design and build a range of bird nesting boxes, bird tables and planters for their community.

The bird nesting boxes—created by Sheddars Richard Potts, Frank O'Neill and Gerry McCaugherty—have been

specially designed for small birds in Paisley and Renfrewshire such as blue tits and robins and the bird tables can feed a large variety of birds, especially over the winter months.

The local community has already benefitted from the items which have been placed at the RSPB Nature Reserve in Lochwinnoch and at Abbeyfield Nursing Home and additional items will be installed in at least eight sites once COVID-19 restrictions allow.

Brian Hunt, Deacon of the Paisley Hammermen Society, said: "We are delighted to support the Men's Shed to continue their excellent work in the community. The donation is part of our ongoing charitable works in Paisley and Renfrewshire."

Richard Potts of Paisley Men's Shed, which is supported by the STAR Project and St Mirren Charitable Foundation, said: "These fantastic bird boxes were developed by individual Sheddars as a pilot project. Based on the success of this, we are hoping to roll out other remote projects to our Sheddars in the future. Much of our valuable work is only made possible thanks to the assistance of local organisations like the Paisley Hammermen Society."

**Pictured:** Peter Pringle, Alan McLauchlan and Deacon Brian Hunt of Paisley Hammermen Society with Frank O'Neill and Richard Potts of the Paisley Men's Shed



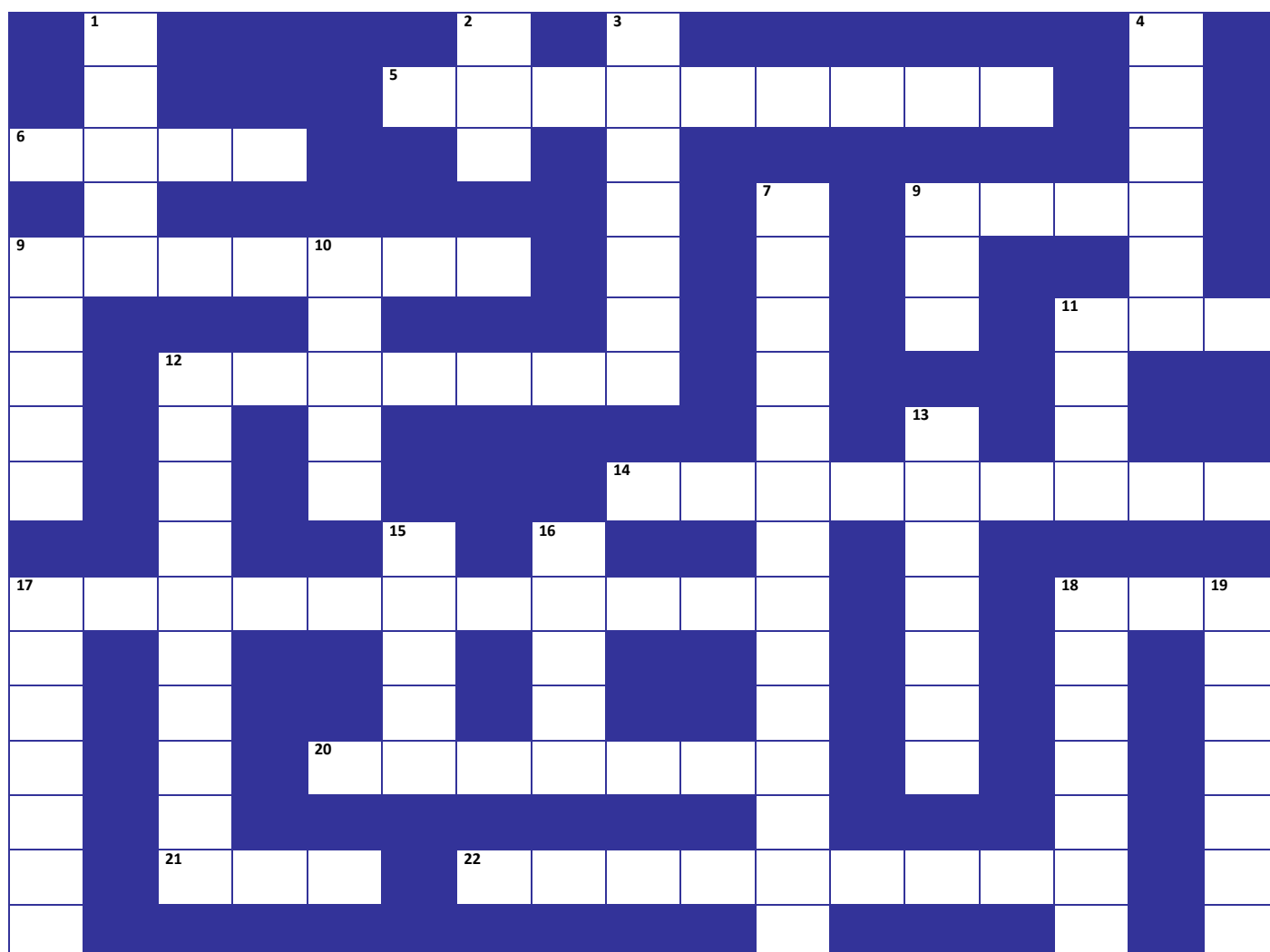
# SHED SHENANIGANS



Why not grab a cuppa and take part in our fun 'Men and their nuts' crossword?

*Compiled by:*

*A Shedder, Three Towns Men's Shed*



## Down

- 1 Group of judges (5)
- 2 Plane? (3)
- 3 One, plus one king! (7)
- 4 Drogue (6)
- 7 Great fear lends this answer (8,6)
- 8 Toadstool top (3)
- 9 Cleave (5)
- 10 Turn the pages of a book (5)
- 11 50% (4)
- 12 Angry rod, maybe? (10)
- 13 Sounds like a spell went! (7)
- 15 Section of the earth's crust (5)
- 16 Preserve (3)
- 17 Confined (7)
- 18 Dekinru unravelled (7)
- 19 Nip back before immobilising (7)

## Across

- 5 Bubble chocolate unwilling to part with money (9)
- 6 First nuttree, centrally, sounds like a mid-afternoon snack (4)
- 8 Enclosure (4)
- 9 Fitted into position (7)
- 11 Spell (3)
- 12 Oppose top bar (7)
- 14 Monarch, e.g.? (9)
- 17 Leads cattle after mixing (11)
- 18 Kept time, then took (t) away (3)
- 20 Type of shoe (5)
- 21 Drag the Scot's ear (3)
- 22 Easily broken (9)

**[CLICK HERE TO CHECK YOUR ANSWERS](#)**

## Bowel cancer awareness talks

**Bowel Cancer UK** provides free bowel cancer awareness talks to workplaces and community groups in the UK. It doesn't matter whether you're a private, public, or third sector organisation, or if you're a local community group, we can support you.



Would your Shed be interested in a free Zoom talk from Bowel Cancer UK\*?

The talk lasts approximately 30 minutes and are delivered online by their dedicated team of trained volunteers, many of whom have a personal connection to bowel cancer.

During the talk you will learn important information about bowel cancer, including:

- prevalence of bowel cancer – learn that it's a more common cancer than people think
- signs and symptoms – learn about the five most common symptoms
- risk factors – discover what increases your risk
- bowel cancer screening – learn about the NHS bowel screening programme and the importance of taking part

Interested?

Book online at [www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk/how-we-can-help/our-awareness-work/bowel-cancer-awareness-talks](http://www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk/how-we-can-help/our-awareness-work/bowel-cancer-awareness-talks)

*\*If you or any member(s) of your Shed take up these opportunities, please let SMSA know how it went in order for us to share this feedback with other Sheds/Shedders*

## SMSA 'Real Lives, Real Change' Cancer Campaign

The Scottish Men's Sheds Association is busy working on its 'Real Lives, Real Change' campaign covering men's health and the impact cancer has on their lives.

This project, funded by [Macmillan Cancer Support](http://www.macmillan.org.uk), is now moving into the interview and sharing stage (utilising online technology).

If you are a man who has cancer, has survived cancer or is supporting somebody going through cancer and would like to help us in this trailblazing work, please contact Jason Schroeder, SMSA Executive Officer, at [ceo@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:ceo@scottishmsa.org.uk)

## Support available from Macmillan\*

- Information on [cancer and Coronavirus](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)
- **Macmillan Cancer Support Line**— Call free on 0808 808 00 00, seven days a week, 8am-8pm
- **Macmillan's Online Community**
- **Macmillan's Telephone Buddy Scheme**—Going through cancer can be an isolating experience at any time, and especially when social distancing. Their free Telephone Buddy service is here for you. Macmillan will match you with someone who understands what you're going through and they'll give you a weekly call. Your volunteer buddy will be a listening ear, ready to talk about how you're feeling and your support needs during this difficult time. They can also let you know about Macmillan services, and all the ways Macmillan can help, to ensure you don't face cancer alone
- **Macmillan Website**—Comprehensive cancer information and support is available online. You can use the 'In Your Area' page to find services near you





# WHAT'S COOKING?



**Bruce Newlands from The Inverclyde Shed shares this hearty zero-waste cauliflower soup recipe with The Scottish Shedder.**

Don't be a waster! Follow this simple recipe and utilise all the tasty and highly-nutritious bits of your veg that you might usually throw away!

This recipe uses one whole large cauliflower with added beans, turmeric and ginger to give it a lovely creamy base whilst the fried cauliflower leaves gives the soup a nice bite. Perfect for making in large batches and freezing to enjoy on a cold day.

Bruce said: "We grow cauliflowers all year round in our community garden. The leaves and stalks are all edible and extremely tasty when roasted but are often thrown away. Our latest batch was a wee bit late in the ground, so have slowed a bit, but they are still nice and tender and it is easy to get at the looser florets before they crown properly.

"We teamed up with the Bluebird Family Centre in December to run a soup kitchen every Friday to serve up hearty winter meals in our community. The aim of this initiative was to stave off hunger but also to re-engage with locals. We have also been supplying honesty veg boxes with recipe cards (pictured right—an honesty box with cauliflowers, kale, savoy, baby leeks and sprout leaves) which are really going down a treat and encouraging people to eat healthy and get cooking."

## Ingredients

- 1 large cauliflower (including the leaves and stalk), chopped
- 1 large onion, roughly chopped
- 1 tsp of salted butter
- 1 litre vegetable or chicken stock
- 1 400g tin of white beans (haricot or cannellini)
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 thumb-sized piece of fresh ginger (or add to your own taste), chopped
- 1 lemon, juiced and zest grated
- a handful of coriander—leaves and stems
- fresh chilli, chopped (or chilli flakes)
- a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil
- salt and pepper to season

## Method

- Fry the chopped cauliflower leaves in butter until golden then season and set aside
- In the same pan, fry the chopped onion until soft before adding the chopped garlic, ginger and chilli to the pan for a few minutes until softened
- Add the turmeric, chopped cauliflower florets and stalk and the stock. Put the lid on and bring to the boil before adding the beans then turn down immediately to a medium simmer and let it cook until the cauliflower is tender
- Blend up the soup
- Serve in a bowl with the cooked cauliflower leaves and a big handful of coriander stems and leaves. Season and add lemon juice and zest to your taste and drizzle with a little extra virgin olive oil and enjoy!

## Zero-Waste Soup

**L** Prep: 5 mins | Cooking: 30 mins



# FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



**Scotland's Virtual Kiltwalk** is set to return this spring offering a much-needed funding boost to Scottish charities.

Across the weekend of 23rd– 25th April 2021, Kiltwalkers all over Scotland will be donning their tartan and taking on their chosen virtual challenge.

In 2020, Kiltwalkers came together, separately, and helped raise an incredible £5 million for over 900 charities, at a time when organisations needed support more than ever.

Whether its hopping, swimming, dancing or anything else, every Kiltwalker will be going the extra mile for their chosen charity. Many organisations have started assembling teams and creating challenges to raise vital funds.

All money raised will be topped up by 50% by the Hunter Foundation. So, get your tartan on and sign up online at [www.thekiltwalk.co.uk](http://www.thekiltwalk.co.uk)



Charities and voluntary sector organisations are being encouraged to apply for funding and support through

the **Adapt & Thrive Programme**, part of the £25 million Scottish Government-funded Community and Third Sector Recovery Programme.

Recovery for the third sector has not been straightforward, and lockdowns, changes to guidelines and the tier system will continue to be part of our daily lives in 2021. As a response, Adapt and Thrive has adapted and all eligible organisations can access funding regardless of turnover size and the top value of grants has increased to £75K.

Applicants will receive one to one specialist support covering range of areas including adapting business models, financial forecasting, developing new income streams and fundraising strategies.

Advisors will work with organisations to develop a recovery plan that is flexible, allowing them to stay open, respond or adapt quickly to any changes in guidelines or tiers.

Unrestricted funding of up to £75,000 is available so it can also adapt around the needs of the organisation. In addition to grants, flexible, 0% interest loans of up to £250,000 are also available.

The programme closes to applications on 31st March 2021 with recovery plans expected to last around 12 months.

For more information and to apply, please visit:

[www.scvo.scot/support/coronavirus/funding/scottish-government/community-recovery/atf](http://www.scvo.scot/support/coronavirus/funding/scottish-government/community-recovery/atf)

## Face Mask Donations

Christmas came early for Scottish Borders' Men's Sheds in the form of a delivery of disposable paper face masks.

Ross Hall, Men's Shed Development Officer at Volunteer Centre Borders, said: "With vastly reduced income streams for our Sheds and no definitive opening date on the horizon, welcome relief came in the form of a massive donation of 10,000 face masks (3 ply, non-medical and disposable) to the Borders Shed Network from [Edinburgh Airport](#).

"Every donation counts and this is a huge bonus that will help our Sheds become safer environments for our Shedders to return to one day. I would urge other Sheds to get in touch with their local airport/airport community fund to begin those discussions."



Cairn Housing Association's **Cairn Community Fund** is committed to creating sustainable neighbourhoods; thriving, well run, and most

importantly, safe places to live. Places that people are proud of and want to live in.

In response to the coronavirus crisis, they have relaxed their funding criteria to support grassroots and community projects that are meeting the needs of vulnerable people at this time.

You can apply for a grant (up to £1,000) provided your project meets at least one of the following objectives:

- environmental improvements e.g. community clean-ups, community allotments and garden projects or health eating projects
- enhance the quality of life in areas where Cairn tenants live e.g. projects that promote safe, healthy and vibrant communities or provide support for events that encourage community cohesion
- encourage tenant participation that will positively impact on Cairn tenants and their families
- while supported projects are not required to directly benefit their tenants they prioritise applications from the communities in which they have homes

Apply online today at [www.cairnha.com/getting-involved/cairn-community-fund](http://www.cairnha.com/getting-involved/cairn-community-fund)



**The Scottish Government**  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

The Scottish Government has provided an interactive breakdown of emergency funds through a new collection of **digital**

**community maps** displaying the support available for communities across Scotland affected by COVID-19. The online dashboard enables users to view financial support by local authority across four main funds.

Visit [www.gov.scot/news/community-funding-maps](http://www.gov.scot/news/community-funding-maps)

## 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

by Tim Green

## Multiplying the Shed Effect Film Project

Our filmmaker, Steven Jefferies, is bringing Age Scotland's Men's Sheds films together into one film. This will be ready for the relaunch of the Men's Shed Movement, when it is safe to open the Shed doors. The film will remind Shedders, potential Shedders, Shed supporters, communities, elected representatives and funders of the magic that goes on in Sheds—'the Shed Effect', as we like to call it.

The project is also working with Moffat, Inverclyde, Cromarty Firth and Gala's Mens Sheds to equip them with the film-making skills to tell their story, document their experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic and outline their vision for their Shed's recovery from coronavirus restrictions. Watch this space for the results of their creative labours.

## The Big Survey

Age Scotland works closely with the Scottish Government, politicians, the media, and policy makers to provide data and insight into how older people experience many aspects of their lives.

That's why we're launching 'The Big Survey', which will ask about a range of topics to give us a greater understanding of what it's like to be an older person living in Scotland today. It also asks how people have been coping during the coronavirus pandemic, giving us a real sense of what is working and what further resources are needed as we continue to live with and recover from coronavirus.

We'll use the findings to prioritise what issues we campaign on, and it will help construct our media and policy responses. It's also envisaged that this survey will be repeated every two years to enable us to track any trends or patterns.

Our ambition is to reach as many people aged 50 and over as possible and we would be very grateful to you if you could complete it. Please feel free to pass on the link to anyone else who may be interested in doing so— it only takes around 10 minutes to complete. Thank you.

Take 'The Big Survey' at <https://wh1.snapsurveys.com/s.asp?k=160745327579>

There are also paper copies available if you would like to distribute them amongst your members. Please contact me if you would like some.

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**THE BIG SURVEY**

ageScotland  
Love better life

**If you are over 50 and living in Scotland**

**Have your say!**

[www.age.scot/BigSurvey](http://www.age.scot/BigSurvey) #TheBigSurvey



The Scottish Shedder is the official free newsletter of the Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA). It inspires and informs Scottish Shedders 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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Support the Men's Shed Movement in Scotland, follow the SMSA at:

