

# THE SCOTTISH SHEDDER

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE SMSA

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SCOTTISH  
MEN'S SHEDS  
ASSOCIATION

*In Scotland, For*

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Lanark Men's Shed**

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COLIN HISLOP  
PHOTOGRAPHY

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## Merry Christmas from all at the SMSA

*The SMSA Team—Jason, Michelle, Tim and Sue—wish all of our members, staff, trustees and supporters of the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement a Shed-tastic Christmas!*

We wish to take this opportunity to recognise our partners and funders for supporting us and we look forward to working with you all in 2024!

The SMSA Shedquarters will close for the festive period on Friday 15th December 2023, as our team takes remaining annual leave for an extended and well-earned break and will re-open on Monday 8th January 2024.

**Happy Holidays. Have a fantastic time!**

The Scottish Shedder (the official FREE magazine of the Scottish Men's Sheds Association) promotes news from Men's Sheds across Scotland to showcase their successes (and challenges)—in addition to highlighting funding opportunities, DIY projects, recipes and much more—to inform and inspire. Each six-weekly issue is sent digitally to over 3,500 Individual Member subscribers and supporters of the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement.

### Contribute to The Scottish Shedder

We want to hear all about your Shed, its latest developments and exciting projects and are therefore asking for your contributions for the next issue (January 2024) by Friday 19th January 2024. We urge you to maximise the potential to raise the profile of your Shed and the Men's Sheds Movement in Scotland. Email Michelle Wibrew, SMSA Communications & PR Officer, at [comms@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:comms@scottishmsa.org.uk)

### Subscribe to the Scottish Shedder

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

### Past issues

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

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



# TALKING SHEDS

by Jason Schroeder

Greetings from a very frosty headquarters with the feel of winter and the festive season almost upon us.

We actually had a very festive and enjoyable occasion for our jam-packed SMSA national gathering, AGM, 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' Awards and 'Battle of the Shed Bands' which took place on the 10th November 2023 at the Carse of Gowrie Men's Shed building in Dundee.

Thanks to all the lads who made it a great day, our guest speaker Paul Clark from [Citrus Energy](#) and a surprise appearance by Woody the Scottie dog.

Congratulations to all the Sheds who applied for this year's awards—which was the greatest number received to date—but with only three going through to the final, you are all winners in our eyes and hope you celebrate yourselves and your achievements in true Shed style. Read all about the awards on [pages 4 and 5](#).

In October, I travelled to Orkney mainland to hold the first SMSA Islands Shed Network Meeting which was hosted by the enviable Orkney Men's Shed in Stromness. It has been many years working with them, and in particular with Morgan Harcus, on their ongoing journey of trying to get a Shed which has eventually resulted in the goose laying the golden egg.

There was a great turnout on the day including Sanday and Westray Men's Sheds and an update from Shetland. I then travelled to Sanday for a meeting with them in their developing Shed and the next day flew to Westray in the smallest six-seater flying go-cart I have had the 'pleasure' of being in to visit their Shed. Luckily, the ferry masters pulled the departure times forward by three hours and we managed to leave sailing into Storm Babet arriving in Aberdeen at 2am. It was decided we will have another gathering in six months time.

The SMSA is always extending its reach to connect with different aspects of our diverse culture to promote the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement. We are delighted to say that we featured in the latest edition of the



[TotalEnergies internal magazine](#) which is sent to the homes of all of Total's offshore personnel. Our article, also included in the Shedder on [page 10](#), aims to raise awareness of Men's Sheds as a support network and healthy pathway for their male employees whilst home.

I was also interviewed by the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (aka the ALLIANCE) for an in-depth [Connected Communities case study on Men's Sheds in Scotland](#).

It is extremely encouraging to be recognised more and more as a leader in men's health as health professionals approach us to share information with you all including new male medical interventions and breakthroughs.

Boston Scientific, who we worked with back in 2021 on a [webinar on prostate cancer awareness](#) to our members, are now sharing a [new advancement](#) improving the quality of life outcomes for men.

Please be aware that while the SMSA does not endorse these, the sharing of this information offers our members and followers a more informed choice and explore further if you—or members of your family and friends—are unfortunate enough to experience ill health.

It is heartening to know that all our work over the past nine years continues to bear fruit in these different sectors which influence the health and wellbeing of men, their families and communities across Scotland.

And finally, Jim Paterson from Aberchirder & District Men's Shed has again turned his creative skills into a winner for the SMSA. Jim was a major creator in the Scottish Men's Shed of the Year target stand and last year he gifted me one of these lovely SMSA antler keyrings (shown below). I have of course asked him if he could make more and he has done so just in time for Christmas to help raise funds for his Shed. Please get in touch with [Jim by email](#) if you would like to purchase one (£15 including postage).

We have had a very busy year and personally I am looking forward to a nice break and recharge period to come back refreshed in January 2024. Our offices will close on the 15th December and reopen on the 8th January 2024.

I wish you all a great festive season and Hogmanay when it comes and again thank you for all your support to me and the SMSA over this past year. 'In Scotland For Scotland' – 2024 here we come.



Jason Schroeder  
SMSA CEO



## New Shed on the Block celebrates double triumph

*They may have only officially opened in October of this year, but **Banff, Macduff and District Men's Shed** is certainly making its mark as their members celebrated a double triumph in the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement world this month.*

The Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) revealed the winner, chosen by the general public, of the 2023 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' title as **Banff, Macduff and District Men's Shed** at their national gathering, AGM and awards on the 10th November 2023.

The announcement was made following three weeks of public voting. The votes came down to the wire for three worthy finalists – Banff, Macduff and District Men's Shed, **Carluk Men's Shed** and **Carse of Gowrie Men's Shed** – as they rallied for their communities and supporters to get behind them.

Over 200+ open or developing Men's Shed groups, across all 32 local authority areas in Scotland, were invited to apply for the awards process before being shortlisted to three by the SMSA Board of Trustees.

Banff, Macduff and District Men's Shed was then unveiled as the winner – live by the SMSA at the awards ceremony on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2023 receiving a tremendous 46% of the votes with Carluk Men's Shed coming a close second – with only 45 votes between them – and Carse of Gowrie Men's Shed in third place.

Commenting on the award, Banff, Macduff and District Men's Shed Chairman Bob Copland, said: "We are absolutely gobsmacked, we really did not expect to be shortlisted let alone win.

"We wish to take this opportunity to congratulate and recognise the outstanding work being carried out by our fellow finalists Carluk Men's Shed and Carse of Gowrie Men's Shed and all the Sheds across Scotland.

"We are overwhelmed, and thankful to the SMSA, for the amount of publicity and interest that the awards have drummed up for us. Thanks go to each of our members for everything they do to make the Shed a success and to every single person that voted for us."

*Continued on next page...*

Figures as at end of October 2023



147

SMSA SHED MEMBERS

3,556

SMSA INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS



138

OPEN SHEDS

65

DEVELOPING/ PROPOSED SHEDS



32

LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS



## UPDATE YOUR DETAILS WITH THE SMSA



New email address? Moved house?



Change of Office Bearers? New Chair?



Not sure if you are a member or not?

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

[Click here to notify the SMSA](#)

*..continued from previous page*

Banff, Macduff and District Men's Shed's journey began back in 2017 when a group of eight men began meeting in a room above the Railway Inn Banff. In 2018, the Shed set their sights on the former Fife Street School in Macduff – a large empty granite building that was up for sale. After a few hiccups and a pandemic in the way, the Shed gained access in September 2022 and signed a 99-year lease in March of this year.

The Shed's varied activities include woodwork, gardening, machinery maintenance, computing, music group/band, snooker, table tennis, cards and board games, group debates, presenting shows on their local radio station and photography to name but a few.

The Shed has also dedicated two rooms solely to let to community groups including Deveron Camera Club, puppy training classes, a street dance group, the Macduff Crafters and the North Aberdeenshire Integrated Drug and Alcohol Service Health and Social Care Partnership which holds weekly acupuncture classes for people suffering from addiction.

The Macduff Market has full use of the premises once a month and there is also a regular presence from the Community Food Initiative North East's mobile food service van to serve the community. The Shed recently hosted Macduff's first-ever car boot sale.

Their list of projects is vast and they have had a huge impact with the younger and older generations in their community in such a short period of time. The Shed has mentored Macduff Primary pupils within the Nurture Hub, worked with Banff Academy and the local Brownies group to build bird boxes as well as refurbished a sun house, seating and built a greenhouse for the local sheltered housing complex.

Jason Schroeder, SMSA CEO, said: "Our three finalists are all excellent examples of best practice and the reason behind showcasing these Sheds through these awards. Our winner is not only improving the health, wellbeing and general quality of life of the members that attend but this group of volunteers has also saved this building from demolition and brought it back for immense community benefit.

"They are sharing this fantastic community resource with other local groups – as there was a lack of suitable and affordable meeting spaces in the area – resulting in bringing the community together through shared premises, assets and knowledge and to also generate income towards the running of the facility to ensure it is here for many years to come."

Banff, Macduff and District Men's Shed were presented with the esteemed SMSA target trophy – created and designed by former SMSA Chairman Derek Keiller and several Men's Shed members – engraved with the Shed name and displayed in a unique stand designed and produced by inaugural winner, Aberchirder & District Men's Shed. The two runners up received a replica trophy, created by David Young Training, to be displayed in their Sheds to recognise them as 2023 finalists.

Along with the title and trophy, the winner receives £2,000 of prizes to support the running of their Shed including a £500 unrestricted cash prize from the SMSA (paid for through SMSA Shed Membership fees); a £150 voucher from Axminster Tools; £250 voucher from Scotmid Co-op; a free Machine Competency and Woodwork training day from David Young Training worth £638; and a year's free accounts package from Thyme Accountants worth £360 to support their Treasurer.



**Pictured (top to bottom):** SMSA CEO Jason Schroeder presents Carluke Men's Shed Chairman John Lindsay with their silver award; Carse of Gowrie Men's Shed Chairman Nick Tindell receives their bronze trophy; SMSA CEO Jason Schroeder collecting the target trophy from 2022 winner, Men's Shed Govan and presenting them with their replica target to display at the Shed; and (below) our 2023 event supporters.



## Battle of the Shed Bands

The SMSA's first gathering of Scottish Men's Sheds since the pandemic took place on Friday 10th November 2023 and featured a new fun entertainment element entitled 'Battle of the Shed Bands'.

Guests were entertained with performances from three Shed bands—'Simply Shed' from Stonehouse Men's Shed, 'The Woodshedders' from Culter & District Men's Shed and the 'Banff & Macduff Sheddors' – who competed for votes from the event delegates.

Banff, Macduff and District Men's Shed celebrated a double win—on top of winning 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year'—as they were selected by the audience to win a Michael Batio MAB Gold Relic guitar manufactured by Dean Guitars donated by the social enterprise [12 Guitars](#) which uses the guitar as an enabler to provide the enjoyment and life-changing benefits that playing guitar can bring to people of all ages and backgrounds.

The Banff & Macduff Sheddors formed almost six years ago to 'get together to play some tunes for fun'. The group has performed at charity events and post-lockdown, when rules permitted, they rolled out a roadshow trailer borrowed from their local radio station, Deveron FM, and entertained the neighbours. Commenting on the announcement, Shed Chairman Bob Copland, said: "All we want to do really is have a bit of fun and not let our instruments, or ourselves, collect dust."

Jason added: "We are not just about woodwork in Men's Sheds – far from it – as strongly evidenced by the Sheds celebrated at the awards event. Sheds are all unique and offer a diverse range of activities to meet their members' needs and the volunteers all have talents and skills they wish to utilise and share with others. Music and bands are just one element that we wished to showcase at our national gathering."

John Conroy from 'The Woodshedders' group from the Culter & District Men's Shed said: "We use our group to promote the health and wellbeing benefits of singing as it can boost confidence, encourage expression and social bonding. Music and singing are really good for you, the known physical benefits include enhancing lung function, helping to relieve stress and anxiety, also improving memory.

"Current members Erik Stein, Peter Helms, Graham James, Paul Bothamley, and I never set out to be a performing group but were encouraged by former Shed Chairman Bill Jamieson to start performing at Shed events before venturing out to public engagements.

"Our ethos is that 'music is the universal language of mankind' and the recording played at the event was from



▶ Banff & Macduff Sheddors



▶ Simply Shed



▶ The Woodshedders

our first-ever public performance at Deeside Golf Club in Aberdeen and the song chosen was written by member Paul Bothamley and will resonate with many Shed's.... 'I Can't Afford the Bill' so it is one very close to our hearts.

"It is hard to describe the feel-good factor that our group gains from singing in a relaxed environment. We love to make our audience happy and hope to continue for as long as we can. We urge other Sheds to consider setting up their own music groups and encourage members of the public to consider joining or starting up a music group at their local Men's Shed."

Stonehouse Men's Shed's 'Simply Shed' ([read their full story here](#)) began playing their guitars and singing together four years ago and performed an emotional one, the 'Island of Dreams Medley'.

***I think you will all agree that these are some extremely talented Sheddors and we thank them for taking part in our Battle of the Shed Bands to showcase that our Men's Sheds are more than just woodwork.***



## Scottish Men's Shed of the Year Award Presentation to Banff, Macduff & District Men's Shed

Representatives from the SMSA travelled on the 23rd November 2023 to hand-deliver the trophy and prizes to [Banff, Macduff & District Men's Shed](#) for winning 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' in addition to a very special guitar for winning the 'Battle of the Shed Bands'.

SMSA CEO Jason Schroeder said: "When we started these awards back in 2019, their purpose was to celebrate, recognise and reward Scottish Men's Sheds for the work they are carrying out in their Sheds to improve men's health and wellbeing and the impact that they are making in their local communities. Since then, the awards have grown tenfold.

"It is a level-playing field for all the Sheds that apply – some have been on the go for over ten years now and some are new and developing. Banff, Macduff and District Men's Shed, as the new Shed on the block, is now the fifth Shed to receive this prestigious title and has proved through this win that these groups of volunteers are making just as big of an impact in a short space of time. Our previous Shed finalists and winners over the years report gaining immense status not just where they live, but also nationally with funders, supporters and the media which was unprecedented."

SMSA CEO Jason then went on to present the 'Battle of the Shed Bands' prize to the Shed donated by partner organisation, 12 Guitars – the social enterprise uses the guitar as an enabler to provide the enjoyment and life-changing benefits that playing guitar can bring to people of all ages and backgrounds. The band was overwhelmed to receive the prize - a Michael Batio MAB Gold Relic guitar manufactured by Dean Guitars.

Shed Chairman Bob Copland who is in the band said: "We couldn't believe it when we won the Scottish Men's Shed of the Year title, and then were doubly gobsmacked when we went on to be announced as the winner of the inaugural Shed bands contest too. We thank everyone that voted for us for both – it has created such a buzz in the Shed. When we shared the news with our members that our band had also won, they were delighted thinking that they had won a photo print of the guitar, then found out that we had actually won the guitar itself! We are

over the moon to say the least."

At the presentation event, the Banff & Macduff Shedders band - vocalist Graham Souter, drummer Alex Sutherland, Bob

Copland on bass, John Bloor on rhythm guitar and lead guitarist Bob Brown playing the new guitar - not only entertained guests to the Shed with their winning song 'Don't Rock the Jukebox' but also performed live on air to Deveron FM listeners who were also treated to a live interview from the SMSA sharing the great news.

Chairman Bob Copland (now 62), who suffered his first stroke at the age of 29, said: "The Battle of the Shed Bands was a great opportunity to feature that there are more to Men's Sheds than just woodworking. Some men are just not interested in DIY and have so many other hobbies and interests that can bring them together for better conversations. Our band members have all performed in other bands in the past and playing together at the Shed has been great.

"I returned to play the guitar as part of my recovery process following a stroke which affected my left side. My left hand used to seize up and I thought, if I can just keep working my hand it will come good, and through playing the guitar regularly, it did. Many of our members have a background story to tell, our vocalist Graham is a recovering alcoholic and our drummer Alex didn't leave the house for years following a horrific attack and was left for dead. Our rhythm guitarist John Bloor is also recovering from prostate cancer which was only discovered when he decided to go to his GP to get checked after a conversation with another Shed member. It really is fair to say that joining the Men's Shed and playing in the band is truly life-changing for all of us."

Jason added: "We are trying to get the message out there to men living in Scotland that you don't have to know how to make a bird box to join a Men's Shed. The Shed is just the place that brings men together either with common interests or with skills and talents that they can share with others or just come along for the craic and a cuppa. Both commonalities and diversity make for better conversations in the Shed."



## New animation: What is the SMSA and what do we do across Scotland?

*Men's Sheds are set up by and run by volunteers but who supports those volunteers in our communities?*

*This is where the Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) and their latest awareness-raising [animation](#) comes in.*



Men's Shed members and trustees are all volunteers and these volunteers require someone at the end of the phone or an email or to meet with them one-to-one to take the time to provide Shed-specific information, advice, resources and tools to support them and save them reinventing the wheel.

Over the last nine years, since the SMSA's inception, the Association has been 'In Scotland For Scotland', and not affiliated with any other organisations, to support volunteers in their local towns and communities along this development pathway to grow the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement to what it is today—whether their Shed is fully open, just developing or a group of men wanting to chat about an embryonic idea for their community.

SMSA CEO Jason Schroeder said: "This animation and raising awareness of what we do across Scotland to garner financial support is key to our strategies and brings us closer to achieving our vision to have a Men's Shed in every single town and city in Scotland to reach all men over the age of 18 living in Scotland so that they are better informed of the support we can provide them and to maximise their use of it.

"The animation is a useful tool when reaching out to partner organisations and grant supporters/funders to fully explain the vital work we do to keep the Movement thriving. Across the globe, there are 3,000+ Men's Shed groups across 16 countries all supported by a national body similar to the SMSA and the successful Scottish model is now being replicated by other countries—which we are humbled by and immensely proud of.

"The SMSA team is just a call, a click or a trip away from delivering tailored advice to save any duplication of effort at every stage of the Shed journey. We are just a small team but with a big job to do and strive to provide a wide range of services including Shed visits, online support, a comprehensive website filled with all the information from starting up a Men's Shed to becoming a sustainable Shed, a members' database, online members' resource library, Shed Network meetings across ten regions and national events and gatherings."

"In addition to this, our charity also provides Shed membership benefits with discounts from our partner organisations, mediation services, a 'Find a Shed' map for potential Sheddors to find the Shed closest to them, and regular updates relevant to Scottish Men's Sheds through The Scottish Shedder magazine, Shedloads of Opportunities Bulletin, email communications and our popular social media channels.

"As a focused men's health and wellbeing charity, we support thousands of our members and hundreds of open and developing Men's Shed groups. We are here to inspire and support volunteers and through our work, the chances are that we will have the solution to your problem or challenge. We will continue to focus on men's health in Scotland and do our bit in creating a healthy and thriving country."



[Click to play the SMSA animation](#)

**Help change our Scottish communities for the better and improve men's lives through Men's Sheds by liking and sharing this new [animation](#) with your networks to help more volunteers succeed on their development pathway.**

## It's beginning to look a lot like Shedmas!

Sawdust is falling as Shedders are busy making toys, birch disc reindeer; band saw reindeer; wood turned Christmas trees, baubles and snowmen; and pallet Christmas trees and snowmen.

Sheds have also been helping their local community charities with Christmas lights and Santa's sleighs. Christmas fairs are bringing in funds to keep Sheds running and kindling split in Sheds across Scotland will help communities gathering winter fuel to keep the yule logs burning.

Some Sheds will keep their social area open over the festive season to offer a warm space for those seeking companionship and folk needing some respite from the stresses of the season.

I've visited a couple of care homes this month—Forthbank in the Raploch, Stirling and [Daviot](#) near Inverness—they are utilising the men's shed model as a way of providing companionship, creativity and purpose for both male staff and male residents.

Some of the residents living with dementia or cognitive or motor decline are making candle holders, planters and bird boxes from pallets or oak barrel staves in a safe and supervised environment supported by volunteers and/or staff. For some of the residents, the muscle memory of sanding a piece of wood or drilling a hole brings back recollections of a previous life and/or provides a meaningful focussed activity.

Staff are learning new skills and time spent in the Shed enables them to have a different more social, shoulder-to-shoulder relationship with those in their care. Relatives of the residents value the positive impact of attending Men's Shed sessions is making on their loved ones.

In October, two new regional Men's Shed Networks were convened by the SMSA. The first of which saw Jason Schroeder chairing a Northern Isles Men's Shed Network at the Orkney Men's Shed. Finechty Men's Shed kindly hosted the Moray Men's Shed Network meeting chaired by myself. Our network meetings across Scotland bring Sheds together to connect, support, share and learn.

Have a strong, kind and vocal festive season. I look forward to catching up with you in the new year.

**Tim Green**  
SMSA Development Officer



**Pictured:** Tim presenting at the SMSA national gathering/AGM earlier this month. If you were unable to attend, please [click here](#) for his presentation on the support provided to Scottish Sheds from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

## Upcoming Regional Shed Network Meetings 2024

- **Perth and Kinross** - Saturday 20th January 2024 at Kinross & District Men's Shed from 11am
- **Greater Glasgow and Clyde** - Wednesday 24th January 2024 at Men's Shed Govan from 10.30am
- **Lothians** - Wednesday 31st January 2024 at Forth Bridges Men's Shed from 11am
- **Aberdeen City/Aberdeenshire** - Tuesday 20th February 2024 at Bridge of Don Men's Shed at 11am
- **Moray** - At Cullen Men's Shed - Date/time to be confirmed
- **Ayrshire** - At Clyde Coast and Cumbraes Men's Shed - Date/time to be confirmed
- **Angus and Dundee** - To be confirmed
- **Fife** - At St Andrews Men's Shed - Date/time to be confirmed
- **Northern Isles** - To be confirmed

If you wish to attend a regional Shed Network meeting in your area, please contact Tim Green, SMSA Development Officer on 07493361003 or email [Dev1@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:Dev1@scottishmsa.org.uk)

## Men's Sheds and Offshore Workers

With over 200+ Men's Shed groups across Scotland alone providing a wide range of activities to all men over the age of 18 to boost their health and wellbeing, Chief Executive Officer of the Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) Jason Schroeder discusses how the Men's Sheds model could provide the offshore energy sector with a support network and healthy pathway for its male employees whilst home.

Jason said: "Here at the SMSA, we actively promote Men's Sheds as a healthy choice for all men in Scotland aged 18+ from all walks of life and with time on their hands. And, offshore workers – approximately 95% of which are male - have plenty of that when they are home.

"With a decline in the mental health of offshore workers being reported as a challenge for the offshore energy sector, we are currently reaching out to the sector to raise awareness of what Sheds have to offer. Working offshore presents many unique challenges to its workforce and can be dangerous, demanding, arduous and isolating. We often hear of the guys coming home after a 'work, eat, sleep, repeat' shift pattern dynamic and taking a while to settle back into family life again after weeks away separated from family and friends.

"But then what happens when they come home for their 2-3 weeks? Unless the worker has a strong social circle around them and a range of hobbies and interests, the lack of purpose can often mean an intensive free time period and boredom and under-foot syndrome sets in as the home routine changes again. The offshore lifestyle can considerably affect the whole family unit with the partner managing on their own as a single unit and/or lone parent and everyone has to adapt again.

"This lifestyle can unfortunately exacerbate feelings of loneliness, stress, anxiety and depression and lead to poor physical health and psychological ill-health, absenteeism, poor performance, increased accidents, substance misuse, breakup of the family unit and job dissatisfaction."

Jimmy Bremner from Finecht Men's Shed said: "I worked for 36 years offshore and how I wish I had a Men's Shed to go to back then. As the chef, I spoke to hundreds of guys every single day then, and I mean no disrespect to my family, when I came home, it was just me, the wife and kids for a few weeks with very little routine—it was a huge change.

"The Shed is a godsend for me now in my retirement and we are currently trying to get more offshore guys to come along now, while they are still working, and build relationships shoulder-to-shoulder and open up and talk, learn, share their skills and expertise and have some fun. It can be life-changing. If you are happy in your home life, you will look forward to it and also be happier at work."

Jason added: "Back in 2013, when I was involved in setting up the first Men's Shed in Aberdeenshire, we

were shocked to hear from the Citizens Advice Bureau in this region of the high volume of enquires from local women asking for advice on how to divorce their husbands. One of the top reasons for our focus on this locality was to keep the marriages together by creating a place for these men to go, get out the house and from under their wife's feet, bring back conversation to the marriage and still feel they had an identity and purpose.

"Going along to a Men's Shed is completely voluntary – and gets men out of the pubs and bookies – and gets them active in their communities for connections and camaraderie. Coming home can be quite a shock to the system – transitioning from an extremely busy and noisy environment and then home for a few weeks with no or very little routine. Many men struggle with that transition due to boredom and Sheds can help fill the void by offering a healthy social element leading to a happier home life for the offshore worker and their partner/family unit.

"Men's Sheds offer much-needed purpose during downtime from the rig. Not only are Sheds a place to go to socialise, but for some can provide activity-based projects carried out shoulder-to-shoulder and opportunities to learn/share trades and skills with like-minded men. That said, Men's Sheds have evolved from the initial Australian model launched 30+ years ago as a space for craftwork and the social interaction of older men and some men are simply not interested in that aspect of the Shed. The list of Shed activities on offer is endless as these are created 'for the men, by the men' to meet their needs and can include 3D printing, book clubs, sport and fitness, bands/music groups, arts and crafts, writing groups, gardening, environmental and wildlife projects, day outings and computing to name but a few.

"There is no pressure to attend the Shed regularly – there are no bosses, no deadlines, no stigma. It is all voluntary, you just turn up on the Shed's open days that suit you and enjoy! Sheds offer a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment in your own community across all 32 local authority regions.

"Whilst initiatives are in place to protect the health and wellbeing of personnel offshore, Men's Sheds could offer a new approach/voluntary choice when the worker is home to tackle the root of the problem as a preventative health measure. In Sheds, men simply open up and talk and also support each other creating a healthy lifestyle of socialisation.

"The intergenerational model also ensures that younger men make connections and friendships for life in their communities whilst they are still working leading to a better quality of life and a healthier offshore workforce in the future."

**Take a look at the SMSA's latest animation entitled ['What is a Men's Shed?'](#) to find out more and [search](#) for a Shed close to you.**

# SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT—DINGWALL MEN'S SHED



***The SMSA takes a peek at the almost-complete Dingwall & District Men's Shed, 'built by the community, for the community' on a former skate park and now one step closer to an official opening after 19 months of hard graft from its members and supporters.***

Brian Liddle, Dingwall Men's Shed Chairman, said: "Back in 2017, our founder Dr Andrew (Andy) Foley mooted the idea of setting up a Men's Shed in our area. A small group of us were very keen on the concept and for my sins, I put my hand up to volunteer to become the Chairman and we began to meet regularly to discuss our plans.

"To kickstart our get-togethers, we were offered the community centre at Ross County Football Club and that is where we spent hours talking, planning and dreaming.

"After a year, we were then given use of the local scout hut in exchange for doing up the place and maintaining it. For the first time, we had a space to make things but the downfall was that there was no heating in the hut and it was just not do-able in the winter months. We explored many alternative premises and gained none until one day, we queried the large expanse of land (1 acre) adjacent to Ross County FC which was formerly a skate park and had not been used for over a decade.

"We prepared a detailed business plan for Highland Council and were thrilled when we were offered a peppercorn rent on a 30-year lease. Initially, we thought about portable cabins being placed on the site but then our aspirations for what was needed in Dingwall and the surrounding area started to grow arms and legs. We wanted an intergenerational community facility incorporating a community craft village for local people

to go to socialise, make connections and have fun and a purpose with the aim to improve their mental and physical health and wellbeing; gain confidence, learn new skills and utilise and share existing ones, partake in their hobbies and interests and improve their awareness of health matters relevant to them.

"Our outcomes for the project evolved in line with national outcomes to live longer and happier and healthy lives, improve our environment and build a strong and resilient community that supports each other.

"The next step was to get an architect on board and our plans were passed by the planning department just as Covid reared its head and scuppered progress. We continued to fundraise and apply for grants during this time and also purchased some containers which are still on site now but mostly used as storage.

*Continued on next page...*



# SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT (Continued)



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“In 2021, we started building once we had reached £46,000 – we connected to the sewer which was a massive job and one of the few times we have had to hire in professionals. Then, power was connected to the site from 400 yards away. In March 2021, the foundations went in and we started to attract locals and trades people with real skills and we all acted as their labourers.

“We had people from all walks of life including an airline pilot, medical professionals and photographers all rolling up their sleeves to help with anything that needed doing at the time from digging trenches and making kindling. The Department for Work and Pensions was also sending people down here to gain experience. It is amazing what people will do for a cause like this.

“We have spent just under £90,000 so far to transform the site and today, we have a high-quality and fully-accessible social unit, metal and wood workshops, a second workshop, polytunnel, log cabin, kitchen, the community craft facility and ample storage. Funding has been achieved through donations, grants and income generated through our project work.

“We don’t wish to highlight any specific individuals or funders for the success of this project, it really has been a fantastic team effort but we must recognise the legacy of our founder, Andy Foley, who sadly passed away. He recognised a need to create something very special here in Dingwall and it will now be here for many generations to come.

“The biggest highlight for me personally through all of this is when we made the building watertight. Right then and there, I knew success was guaranteed and we could finish this project. We are now delighted to have 36 officially members with around 16 regularly coming along two days a week on Wednesdays and Fridays. We have big ambitions for up to 100 members and to open additional days and attract all ages.

“Future short-term plans include obtaining our occupation certificate, installing our fire and smoke alarms and concentrating on our Christmas production line to raise funds then we can start planning for our official opening and raising awareness with our local media for a recruitment drive. To even say we are immensely proud of the joint achievement by everyone involved would be an understatement. Many hurdles have been put in our way and together we overcame them. Let’s see what the future brings.”

Follow the Shed’s journey on [Facebook](#).



## Lanark Men's Shed's new beginning...

*The SMSA caught up with [Lanark Men's Shed](#) Chairman Alan Ross to hear all about their recent relocation to their new larger premises situated alongside the picturesque River Clyde within the grounds of the UNESCO World Heritage site in New Lanark—a view so idyllic that it made our cover photo.*

Alan said: “Lanark Men's Shed (LMS) began back in October 2021 and almost two years to the day, we are blessed to have just moved to our fabulous new site situated over two units providing three floors of workspace within the grounds of the UNESCO World Heritage site at New Lanark.

“Having outgrown our previous premises due to our thriving membership, the expansion of our workshop machinery and the scale of work that we wish to undertake for the local community and our member's own projects, the Committee made the decision in June to put out an appeal to local businesses and organisations for new premises to meet our needs.

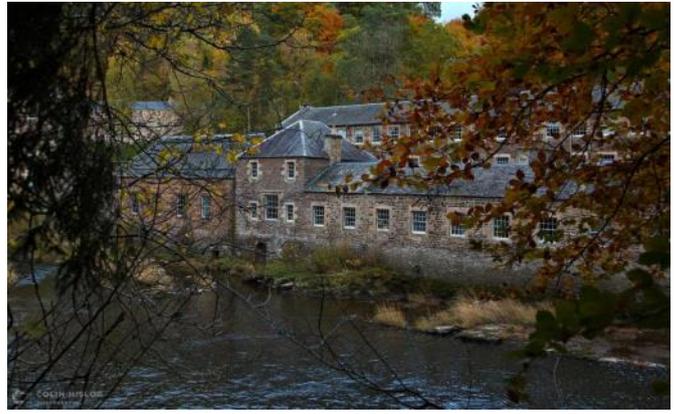
“Our Secretary Liz McIntosh enquired with the New Lanark Trust and to our amazement, within 24 hours we received an offer to use some of the vacant units on an initial one-year lease for a peppercorn rent of £1.

“This affords the opportunity for our Shed to expand our membership and provide a safe space for Sheddors to meet for a variety of day-time sessions including woodworking, woodturning, chess, creative writing, walking group, model making, 3D printing. The move will also allow us to generate additional member-led hobby session groups, and we are now open on a Tuesday evening 6-8pm and soon also on Friday evenings.

“Included within the lease agreement, our members will also be entitled to discounts at the café and there are plans to sell items we produce within the New Lanark shop in the near future. Our new neighbours at New Lanark have also offered us use of half of their barn to store our pre-cut wood from Co-op Funeralcare.

“New Lanark is one of Scotland's six UNESCO Heritage Sites which welcomes over 300,000 visitors annually and really is an ideal spot for us. The location is also known for its abundance of greenery and wildlife and we are very much enjoying our 'Shed with a view' as we watch the herons, otters and kingfishers on the Clyde from the comfort of our cosy new premises as we enjoy putting our feet up and having a brew after a busy few months relocating.

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“The work carried out includes fitting four new workbenches into the main woodwork unit; unpacking and setting up our pinboards, power tools and hand tools; building a wood power tool charging unit completely from scratch, two new workbenches for our two lathes upstairs and rebuilt our existing workbenches and two wooden support tables for the CNC router/laser burner; as well as painting the windowsills, external doors and toilet doors and putting up our signage.

“Also, thanks to a mutual swap with Biggar & District Men’s Shed, we have rehomed their 6ft-long lathe and built a new metal workbench for it. In addition to this, we have also set up our desk/office area and our computer and laser printer and sourced a new kitchen donated from Howdens. New shelving has been erected and a vital step was getting our defibrillator in place.

“The last few months have been hectic for us all to say the least. Getting through this transition period has had its challenges and involved a considerable amount of work in a short timeframe, but... we made it!

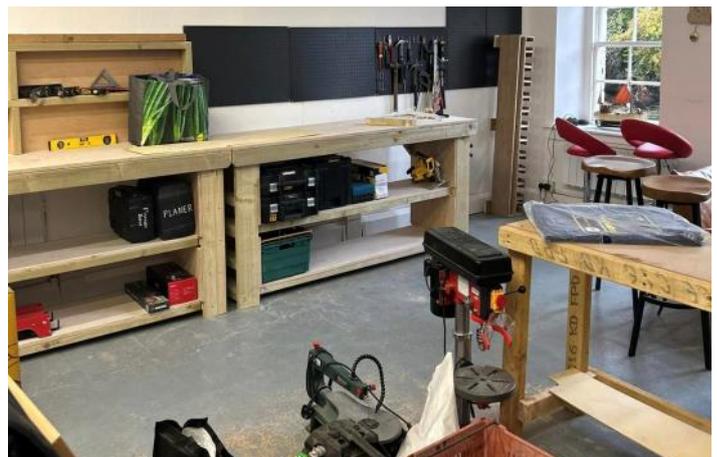
“We thank the management team at New Lanark and appreciate being able to relocate LMS within such a prestigious site and hope it will be a long-term partnership.”

“LMS would like to take this opportunity to thank our local community and all of the local businesses, groups and organisations that have kindly provided us with donations and grants over the past 12 months. Without their support our Shed would not be where it is today, we appreciate every single one of them.

“LMS’s future now looks extremely promising with so much potential with our new premises and other funding applications in the pipeline. We have been overwhelmed by the degree of support shown for us and it really brought home just how appreciated our group, our members and the Men’s Shed is in our community and for that we are forever thankful.”

## Recent LMS projects and updates include:

- Securing funding through The Robertson Trust to pay for machinery awareness training with David Young Training and for two members to receive three days of First Aid training through ALS Training
- Raising over £600 for Prostate Cancer UK by cycling the ‘Etape’ Loch Ness
- Arranged several shed events/talks for members, from NHS Scotland, Paulo Quantos-muscular, & chronic skeletal pain management, Prostate Cancer UK, Age Scotland, St Andrews First Aid and 3D Printing presentation
- Member Les Hunter created a poem for Lanark Medieval Celebration for William Wallace
- Joint project with Lanark in Bloom to provide a large commemorative planter
- Refurbished a garden bench and built numerous planters for various organisations and also helped the local primary school with their polytunnel
- Invited to attend a Scottish Parliament event in November as guests of Age Scotland to celebrate the 80th year.
- Increased our social media following by over 200 followers over three months and we now have a reach to over 10,000 people
- Colin Christianson walked the ‘Camino de Santiago’ pilgrimage walk solo, then gave a public talk afterwards describing his experience.
- Undertook a two-day machine competence and woodwork training course with SMSA partner, [David Young Training](#) (see [page 24](#) for more info)
- Attended several community events including:
  - Presenting at a local justice/social work event to promote the benefit of Men’s Sheds
  - Scottish Mental Health Art Festival at Carstairs Community Hall
  - Co-op support event at Carnwarth shop
  - VASLan Networking event
  - Paths For All event
  - VASLan ‘Meet the Funders’ – The Robertson Trust
  - Voted into first position in the Tesco Lanark ‘Stronger Starts’ (blue tokens scheme)
  - Visited various fellow Men’s Sheds





## Stonehaven & District Men's Shed awarded The King's Award for Voluntary Service

Each year since 2002, outstanding examples of volunteers making a difference in their communities have been celebrated through the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service and now, in 2023, [Stonehaven & District Men's Shed](#) has become the first Scottish Men's Shed to be recognised through [The King's Award for Voluntary Service](#) (KAVS).

Equivalent to an MBE, KAVS is the highest award given to local voluntary groups in the UK, and they are awarded for life. The Shed is one of just 262 charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups to receive the prestigious award this year.

Recipients are announced annually on the 14th November, The King's Birthday, and the 2023 awardees are wonderfully diverse. The Lord Lieutenant of Kincardineshire, Alistair Macphie, is pictured above sharing the news with all the Shed's volunteers during his visit on the 14th November 2023 accompanied by Deputy Lord Lt, John Cruickshank and Jennifer Macdonald (Stonehaven Rotary) a former Deputy Lord Lt.

Chairman Bill Allan said: "The objective of the Men's Shed is to enhance the mental and physical health of the men who have time to spare and wish to pass that time together constructively and enjoyably, learning new skills, or passing on their own and, in the process, contributing to the general wellbeing of the community.

"I am delighted that our members' achievements have been recognised. It is a tremendous honour for our volunteers after all the hard work they have put in to acquire the property, renovate it by raising over £85,000

in funding, whilst also contributing over 4,000 hours of their own hard work to make it fit for purpose. In addition, since opening three years ago, the volunteers have worked on a wide range of projects for the benefit of the community and the wider world. "This Shed is unique in Scotland, as it dismantles used prosthetic limbs for the Legs4Africa charity. These valuable parts, costing a minimum of £5,000 per limb, are shipped to Africa where they are reassembled to fit amputees in several countries.

"The Shed, like others in Scotland, also puts great emphasis on recycling bicycles, garden equipment and furniture and repurposing discarded wood and metal through their projects.

"All this has given the volunteers great satisfaction and pleasure whilst providing comradeship in meeting new colleagues in an environment where they and their families know they are safe, all contributing to the benefit of mental and physical health of older people in the community.

"It is also a great tribute to the Scottish Men's Shed Movement which has now over 200 Sheds up and running or in development. We would like to express our appreciation to the Lord Lieutenancy for nominating us for this award, and also all local Council and our fellow volunteer groups in Stonehaven who have supported us over the past few years".

*Representatives of SDMS will receive the award crystal and certificate from Alastair C S Macphie, Lord-Lieutenant of Kincardineshire later this year. In addition, two volunteers from the Shed will be invited to attend a Royal Garden Party at Holyrood House in July 2024 with other recipients of this year's award.*



**The King's Award  
for Voluntary Service**

## Travel smart with Men's Shed Dalry

[Men's Shed Dalry](#) has offered a safe haven for its 40+ members to develop healthy camaraderie through hobbies since they opened back in May 2022. Resisting the temptation to set out a list of activities, they let the members decide for themselves so woodworking, model making and fly-tying kicked it all off.

A few months later, when four ex-Engineer Shed members had the opportunity to undertake a Velotech Bronze Bike Maintenance course funded by North Ayrshire Council, it quickly evolved into a regular project recruiting additional Shed members to restore pre-loved donated bikes to their former glory for members of the community to travel smarter with a free mode of transport and improve their physical health.

Bike project team member Stuart Crawford said: "Since I retired, I was looking for something just like this to do. It is fantastic to get people out and about on the bikes, exploring the countryside and enjoying it."

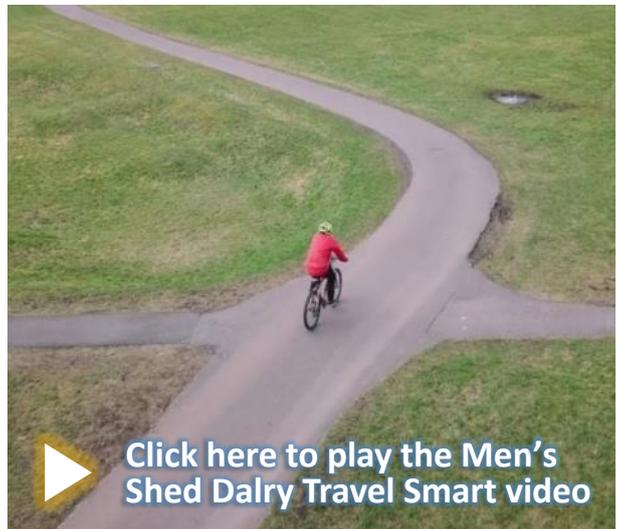
Gus McLafferty from Men's Shed Dalry said: "At around the same time, there was an influx of refugees from Ukraine and Syria settling in our area and an opportunity to support these New Scots was recognised. Restoration of donated bicycles became a key feature in our Shed and a large donation of unused and neglected bicycles from a local business allowed us to quickly facilitate a sustainable mode of transport for our new neighbours, gaining us recognition in the community, and attracting more members keen to support this initiative. Two new members of the team also qualified as Velotech mechanics and boosted our output.

Member Scott McInnes, who at the age of 18 was involved in a car accident which left him suffering from epileptic seizures, said: "This time last year, I would just be in the house. At my first day at the Shed, the guys were out the back finishing off their latest bike and asked me how I got about to which I answered, walk. They offered me a bike there and then. I was overwhelmed as I am not used to people being so generous. I am now really into bikes and cycling everywhere I go."

In September, Men's Shed Dalry was invited to the Glasgow City Chambers to receive the Scottish Adult Learners Group Award in recognition of the refurbishment of over 80 bikes for the refugees from Ukraine and Syria.

Gus McLafferty said: "While this award hangs proudly on the wall of our Shed, it's not just about these six project guys. It stands to illustrate how the people of Dalry opened their hearts to the New Scots, by donating the bicycles which enabled the Sheddies to refurbish them.

"Without the magnanimity of the people and businesses in our wee town, these refugees would not have been mobilised so quickly, so Men's Shed Dalry applauds those generous people who made this possible."



## ‘Simply Shed’

When a bunch of musically talented Stonehouse Shedders in their 70s and 80s got together four years ago and began to talk and share their interests, little did they know what the future would hold.

Graham Curtis, Chairman of [Stonehouse Men’s Shed](#), said: “Pretty much from the beginning of our Shed’s journey in 2019, some of our members began playing their guitars and singing together.

“The group of nine musicians and singers —with influences from Max Bygraves and the Seekers to Neil Diamond, Creedence and the Beatles—started practicing together regularly with the ambition of performing in public. They purchased a full PA System and our band ‘Simply Shed’ was born.

“We were then invited to our first public performance at the Seniors Together Christmas get-together and from there have played in care homes, sheltered housing, Shed parties, afternoon teas and community and charity events throughout Lanarkshire including a sell-out evening in a local church hall raising funds for our Shed.

“Most recently, we were invited to be part of the SMSA’s national gathering earlier this month as part of the ‘Battle of the Shed Bands’ feature. We pre-recorded our performance and it was played at the event to showcase that there is much more to Men’s Sheds than just woodwork!

“Whilst we are sometimes older than our audiences, we just really enjoy playing and singing together. It makes us happy to entertain others and to make them happy too and get them up dancing.

“We now have set lists covering over 30 songs. We play music suitable for audience participation and sing-alongs.”

So what is next for the band members—Graham, John, Tom, Albert, Jim, Ian, Maurice, Harry and Brian? “Well, we are now well known locally and currently have 15 gigs booked up to Christmas and into the new year, although at our age they are more like events rather than gigs”, says Graham.

“We are lucky to have Brian, Albert and John as our ‘elves and roadies’ setting up and moving all of our equipment about. We already have bookings coming in thick and fast for 2024—I think we may now need a band tour bus!”



## Aberchirder Shedder takes the **GOLD** at Invictus Games

In the [July 2023 issue](#) of The Scottish Shedder, we covered David Jarvis' personal story—a British Army Royal Signals veteran and Aberchirder Shedder who was representing Team UK in the Invictus Games in September.

David competed in four different sports – powerlifting, indoor rowing, swimming and cycling and went on to take the gold in cycling and achieved the fastest time across all of the categories despite dealing with a type-1 diabetes diagnosis during his training that almost cost him his life.

David said: “I still can’t quite believe it. It was a very special and emotional moment with the family during the presentation ceremony.

“Meeting Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex—the Founder of the Games—was incredible especially when he helped my four-year-old daughter Sophia over the barrier to join me and even offered to lift the rest of my family over to reach me as well. I wish to thank everyone for the support, the comments and messages throughout this journey—it has been incredibly humbling.”

[Watch the video here on You Tube](#) (and try not to cry like our Sheditor did) as David greets his family following the ceremony with the Duke of Sussex.



## Aboyne and District Men's Shed receives Just Transition Funding

[Aboyne & District Men's Shed](#) has just been awarded funding for capital improvements to improve the energy efficiency of their building through the [Just Transition Participatory Budget Fund](#).

Following a vote with residents of Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City and Moray, the Shed was selected as a winner and has been awarded £13,290 to install a battery to further reduce the Shed's carbon footprint by utilising excess solar PV energy to power overnight standing loads.

In line with Just Transition principles, this will optimise the Shed's local renewable energy use by this much-used facility. The ensuing savings will help maintain a low operating cost reflected in the room rates currently enjoyed by user groups.

This is just Year 2 of the Fund—there are opportunities for Sheds in this region to apply in future rounds, so keep an eye on the [website](#).

Trustee Mike Brooks said: “We are all delighted! Most of the credit for our success with this award goes to our Treasurer Phil Lay who put in all the work for our application. All the trustees and our regular members worked hard by making sure everyone knew about our application so they could vote for us.

“Thanks are also due to everyone who voted for us! We are pleased not only because of the money, which enables us to back up our solar power with batteries, but because it matters to us so much that we have the support of our local community, and of course our fellow Sheds through the SMSA.”



## CARES Video: Aboyne & District Men's Shed

Back in 2020, during the early stages of the Shed's building work, Aboyne & District Men's Shed received £7,922 capital funding from the 'Let's Do Net Zero Community Buildings Fund' towards the installation of four air source heat pumps.

Shed Treasurer Phil Lay and Trustee Mike Brooks recently took part in a recent promotional video for CARES to showcase the difference that this funding made to the Shed.

Watch the [video](#), read their [case study](#) and [click here](#) to find out more about the fund.

## New Men's Shed in Daviot Care Home supports male residents and staff

A new Men's Shed has opened within a care home in Daviot. One of only a few of these spaces operating from within care homes in Scotland, the Shed is being run by leading care provider [Meallmore Ltd](#) to offer a place for both its male residents and male staff members to practice skills and enjoy making and mending, whilst also facilitating social connections, friendship building, and sharing skills and knowledge.

The new facility offers a safe space for residents to come together to socialise and carry out activities chosen by the Shedders and will bring a range of benefits to the health and wellbeing of those taking part.

The Shed provides tools for training and skills development and residents have already begun building garden benches and candle holders.

The Shed was officially opened by actor Ron Emslie, who starred in the production of 'Man Shed', which was performed during the Edinburgh International Fringe Festival. For the opening, the care home hosted a party, where colleagues and residents were joined by friends, family and loved ones

to celebrate with some delicious homemade canapes and fizz.

Meallmore currently has a network of 26 care homes across Scotland, including offering care for the elderly and adults with mental health diagnosis. Manager Heather Cowan said: "Being part of the Men's Shed Movement in Scotland and the welfare of men's health is something we're very passionate about at Meallmore.

"We've created this new space to facilitate connection, conversation and creativity. It encourages people to come together to build, fix and restore, not only physical projects, but themselves included!

"It is of huge benefit to our male residents and colleagues, and we're already seeing the benefits. We're excited to see what items they all make and continuing to see its impact on our little community."

On the 15th November 2023, SMSA's Development Officer Tim Green visited the Shed. Tim said: "Both staff and residents are gaining a great sense of purpose and companionship from working on a range of objects for sale by donation including bird boxes, planters and oak barrel stave tealight holders and benches.

"Both male staff and male residents use the shed for companionship, relaxation and sharing and learning new skills."



## The Govan Calendar Boys

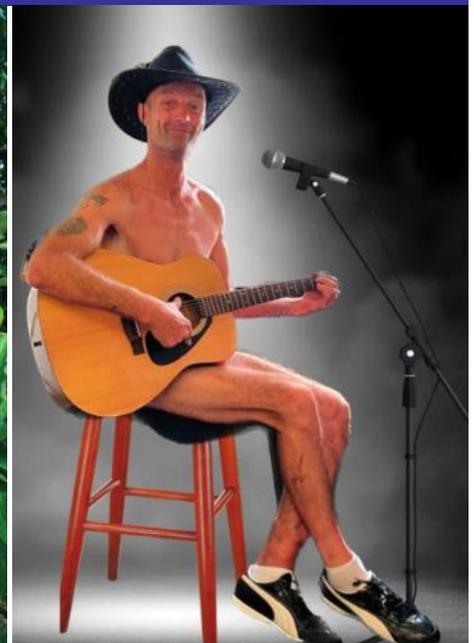
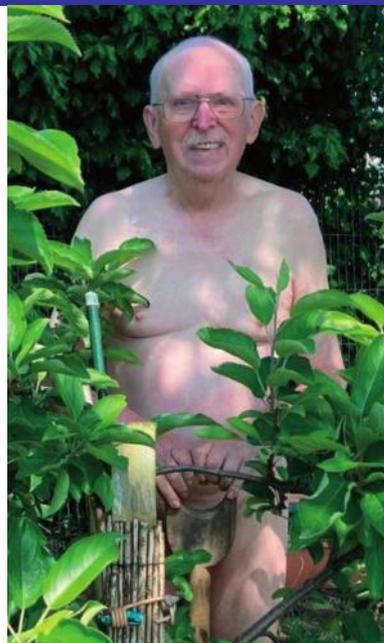
[Men's Shed Govan](#) is proud to launch its latest fundraiser—the 'Calendar Boys' calendar 2024!

Each month features a photo of one of the Govan Shedders with their kit off and as naked as the day they were born. All done in the best possible taste of course and nothing that your Granny wouldn't giggle about.

All proceeds will go to help meet the running costs of the Shed.

Every calendar sold raises funds that help them deliver the community projects and social good that they are well known for.

Buy in their [online shop](#) - an absolute steal at £10 each!



## 'It's all wood' at Garnock Valley Men's Shed's learning sessions

From beautifully turned bowls, pens, bud vases, pestle and mortars to viking goths—'it's all wood' at [Garnock Valley Men's Shed](#) (GVMS) with their free woodcraft courses proving popular with existing members and attracting new ones.

The Shed is delighted that their free Saturday morning woodturning sessions, advertised in February of this year, have been a huge success and fully booked out and thoroughly enjoyed by members.

Shed Member Stuart completed his first bowl after just six training sessions and is pictured below proudly showing off his first pen created on the lathe.

Rob, one of the members on the woodturning basics course, called into the Shed recently to gift one of their creations—a woodturned bowl—to a fellow Shedder to thank them for the opportunity to gain such valuable skills.

The items are so popular with the community that the Shed is now offering to create bespoke wood-turned items on the lathe through their [Facebook page](#) to raise funds towards the running of the Shed.

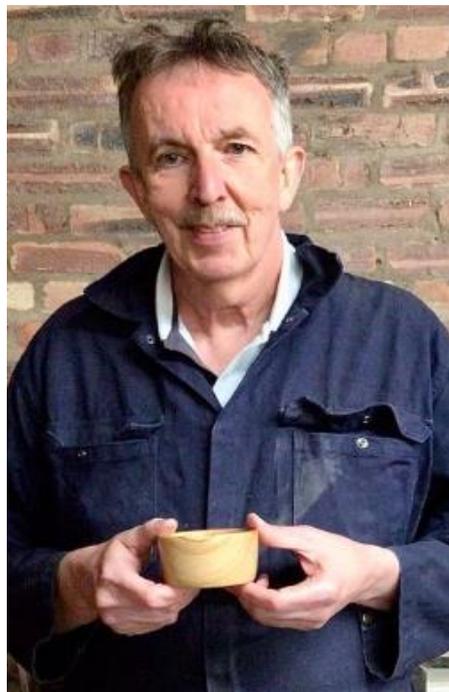
This is not the first time that GVMS has delivered woodworking courses in their community. A few years back, they worked with local dementia respite centre, Anam Cara to deliver a woodcrafting course to build memory boxes for men whose lives were impacted by memory loss.

Photos were taken during the course that were then presented to the men, along with certificates, which became the first items to be placed in their completed memory boxes.



**Pictured above:** Viking goths made on the lathe; pheasant head walking stick; Rob's bowl gifted to a fellow member; and beautiful oak bowls for sale at the Shed.

**Pictured below (left to right):** GVMS members displaying their woodturned items including a pen, bowl and bud vase.



## Carluker Sheddors get a police escort

Now we have your attention!

[Carluker Men's Shed](#) (CMS) hasn't just been busy winning the Silver Award for 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' 2023, they have also been up to quite a few other things including seeing Elvis and getting police escorts!

In September, the Shed hit some major milestones through the installation of their new double glazing to keep them all cosy this winter and they also got their new Shed connected to the broadband world.

To celebrate, the members went to see Elvis! Well, Rob Kingsley in the 'A Vision of Elvis' tribute to be exact and then returned in November to see 'Showaddywaddy'.

The Shed members were back to Motherwell Football Club's Fir Park Stadium to carry out additional tidy-up work on the communal garden in time for their family fun day.

The members also had a return visit to Carluker High School on Friday 27th October 2023 to see the second of the planters they built for them, all planted up by the pupils and also attended their Business Breakfast.

CMS met with teachers and pupils at Carluker High Mill Primary School to find out about Opal Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) and discuss a spruce up of their playground including ambitious plans for a boat—a real boat—for the children to play on.

The Sheddors got into the Christmas spirit creating a sleigh and postbox for their local Tesco store. The members worked feverishly for several weeks to complete these projects for local youngsters to enjoy.

Shed Chairman John Lindsay said: "On completion of the sleigh inside the Shed, the members soon realised unfortunately that it was too big to get out of the Shed!

"After dismantling it, taking it outside and reassembling it, we then went on the hunt for a police escort to get the sleigh from the Shed to Tesco in Carluker."

CMS members enjoyed their first official blether/get together in their new Shed earlier this month in addition to a visit from local Carluker councillor Eileen Logan.

The social gatherings continue and at the end of this month, the Sheddors are looking forward to hitting the road in a 17-seater minibus to head to Newbridge to board two twelve-seater barges for their Christmas Barge Trip on the Union Canal at Ratho, near Edinburgh, which was cancelled last year.

CMS will also hold their annual Christmas party at Carluker Leisure Centre—in a bigger hall this year—as they let their hair down and enjoy some entertainment from Stonehouse Men's Shed's band 'Simply Shed'.

CMS will also be attending the South Lanarkshire Older People's Assembly and lunch representing the Shed and in the new year, the Sheddors will attend a lovely five-course Burns Supper at Carluker Golf Club.

Follow [Carluker Men's Shed](#) for more updates.



**Pictured (top to bottom):** the new double glazing at the Shed; the sleigh for Tesco; John Lindsay at the Motherwell FC communal garden; Carluker High School's garden; police escort for the santa sleigh; delivering the sleigh and postbox to Tesco in Carluker; and the Sheddors enjoying their first get-together in their new home

## Ben Fogle drops in on Orkney Men's Shed

The 'Scotland's Sacred Islands' series broadcast on BBC Scotland, earlier this month, saw Ben Fogle drop in on [Orkney Men's Shed](#).

The episode saw the presenter not only grab a hammer and nails to help the members with a playhouse for a local primary school, but he also got involved in the most important part of Shed-life as the members gathered for a brew and some banter in the social area.

Ben chatted with Orkney Men's Shed Chairman Morgan Harcus and the members on how Men's Sheds are tackling the epidemic of loneliness as men gather to talk

about their health and share their problems shoulder-to-shoulder.

Ben said: "I cannot believe I have not heard of a Men's Shed until now. Every town, city and village in the British Isles should have one! There are way too many lonely people, many of which are men. The Shed offers a place to sit, drink your tea and be a part of something offering company, friendship and a sense of purpose.

David Gardner, SMSA Chairman, said: "Morgan did a fabulous job of explaining the whole ethos of Scottish Sheds during Ben's visit by highlighting the workshop aspect as only one part and that the heart of the Shed is the social area where the guys can relax whilst enjoying tea and biscuits.

SMSA Trustee, Francis Edwards from Sanday Men's Shed, added: "Orkney Men's Shed did us all proud and Morgan promoted what has been achieved in an 'Orkney Mainland Shed' perfectly."



[▶ Watch on BBC iPlayer here](#)



## Inverurie Shedders feed community spirit

[Inverurie & District Men's Shed's](#) community farm 'The Howe' is not only providing a valuable resource and green space—connecting a wide range of people with the land—but is also quite literally, feeding community spirit through the provision of local, healthy and seasonal produce at their monthly farmers' market.

The community allotments afford the opportunity for locals—including teachers

and pupils from surrounding schools—to join the green-fingered Shedders to get hands-on experience and take immense pride in the upkeep of the area and also enjoy and share local produce.

In addition to their regular presence at the farmers' market, the Shed also holds community events and take part in local fairs. At their most recent gathering at the allotments on Old Port Road, the Shed held a barbecue with entertainment from their Shed band whilst enjoying the fruits of their labours.



## Aberchirder lad's 78-hours Shedding for Duke of Edinburgh Award

Sixteen-year-old Casper Steen Nielsen from Aberchirder, is carrying out 78 hours of volunteering at his local Men's Shed to achieve his Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award.

The prestigious award is designed to empower young people; support them as they learn new skills and overcome obstacles; and build confidence and resilience.

Jim Paterson from [Aberchirder & District Men's Shed](#) said: "Casper is hard-working and motivated and it has been great having him along to the Shed on Wednesday afternoons. He designed and made a beautiful bird box and planters for his bronze award. His confidence grew in just a few weeks and he

has already mastered his design for his Gold award—a lovely wooden garden patio love seat with table."

Casper, who has also been able to share his computing skills and knowledge with his fellow Sheddors, said: "I have always enjoyed working on small woodwork projects with my dad and also work part-time at Bremners of Foggie furniture store on Saturdays doing odd jobs. So, I jumped at the chance to undertake my DofE experience at my local Shed.

"Jim has really helped mentor me and I am really enjoying it. I am extremely thankful to him and the other members for this opportunity and their time."

Jim added: "Casper is doing something rewarding for his community whilst learning new skills in carpentry—something that he is very interested in.

"The experience is also broadening his aspirations as he explores the future pathways open to him as he leaves school next summer. We hope that he will return when he is 18 to join the Shed."



## Soup Kitchen at Aberchirder Shed

[Aberchirder & District Men's Shed](#), in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council's Community Learning and Development service, plans to launch a soup kitchen once a week for the local community in January 2024. Funding is in place and the Shed plans to install additional sinks in their kitchen area. The Shed, which runs Food Hygiene & Safety classes from their premises, will also put some members through the sessions.



## Creating a 'home from home' for the Fraserburgh community

The SMSA was delighted to visit [Fraserburgh Community Men's Shed](#) last month to check out their new premises.

They are settling in nicely to the former Brethren Church that they purchased and have been busy transforming the building, and fundraising through several initiatives including Co-op Causes, to meet their members' needs.

The Sheddors are concentrating on making the social area into a warm comfortable 'home from

home' for members and are also organising their first Christmas dinner in the Shed. The next phase will be to create their workshop, storage space and also develop the garden area which has lots of potential.

The Shed on Albert Street is open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 10am to 2pm and Monday evenings from 6 to 9pm.

Exciting ideas being flown about include cookery classes, quiz nights, bingo nights, takeaway nights, model making/crafts, sewing, computer classes, creative writing and local and family history. The Shed world is their oyster!





## Machine Competence and Woodwork Training at Lanark Men's Shed

*Lanark Men's Shed recently undertook two days of training with SMSA's partner, [David Young Training](#), so we got in touch for some feedback on how it all went.*

Shed Chairman Alan Ross said: "Initially, some may think that workshop machinery awareness training is not really required, especially when you have a group of 'old school' wood Shedders that are so adamant that they already know how to use some or most of the machines. Then after a few incidents where some are caught out taking shortcuts, or have had the odd 'near miss' and won't 'take a telling' you know it's finally time to get the professional trainer in.

"The cost can be a bit of a thought for any Shed initially, with lots of other bills to pay, however in David's case you really do get what you pay for. Our Shed applied for funding which was granted and we took advantage of the exclusive rate for being an SMSA Shed Member and also used our additional discount received as a prize for winning the Bronze 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' Award last year to utilise David over two days to ensure every one of our 16 woodworkers was put through the training on our machinery.

"I would say you cannot put a price on safety training and David absolutely covered everything. A considerable



amount of time is spent at each machine demonstrating how to inspect it, checking parts, and that each machine was set up properly beforehand, and he covered maintenance and cleaning, and of course the best working practice of physically using the machines.



"Although we are aware that Men's Sheds are not responsible or held accountable for health and safety under the H&S Executive, we do feel much better that we have gone ahead and put everyone through the training. It not only gives peace of mind in that members receive a signed document stating they completed training but in addition it shows we have a commitment to caring for our members and their continued safety.

"David was articulate in speaking and gave very precise and direct instruction, his 30+ years experience was very much evident and he was great company. Our members ALL agreed they enjoyed it and came away having gained something from it... Some even had 'lightbulb' moments over the two days.

"We would certainly have David return for additional awareness training and would highly recommend him to other Sheds."

**SMSA Shed Members can benefit from discounted machine competence and woodwork training courses through [David Young Training](#). [Click here to find out more.](#)**

# A PERSONAL STORY

***Almost ten years ago, William (Billy) Christie – the newly-elected Chairperson of Barrhead Men’s Shed – was diagnosed with testicular and prostate cancer and health complications that forced him to give up a much-loved career. Feeling lost, Billy reveals why connecting with his local Men’s Shed and peers in his community was a godsend for him.***

Billy (62) said: “I am a third-generation market trader and when the markets declined, I began opening up my own shops. I made a good living with a £1million business turnover and had ambitious plans to double that. Then in 2014 came the devastating news that I had testicular and prostate cancer and my life changed drastically.

“Following my surgery, there were many complications including an MRSA infection and septicemia. I was in and out of hospital, my marriage broke down, I had to leave my home due to no longer feeling safe and my doctor advised that my body was too weak to ever return to work. I suffered from mental health issues that eventually saw me get sectioned.

“After my divorce my youngest brother also passed away and I found myself in a very dark place and contemplated suicide. I knew I had to do something so I rejoined my church.

“A founding member of Barrhead Men’s Shed is also involved with the Salvation Army and had been raising awareness of the Shed at the church and a lady came over to talk to me about it. I was in a very bad place, there’s no doubt about it, and can honestly say that this exchange was my saving grace.

“I decided to go along to the Shed and a friend came along with me. Having this place to go was an absolute godsend and gave me a purpose to get out again and kickstart my life.

“As a market trader I was never shy but over the years, I had lost my confidence. The more I went along to the Shed, the more I started to come out of my shell and met some great guys, including Alex Locke. Alex was

so kind and knowledgeable and he guided me. I had never so much as picked up a screwdriver before and he really took the time to introduce me to all the tools and machinery. When we lost Alex earlier this year, to a heart attack, it was a huge loss to all of us at Barrhead Men’s Shed. Alex achieved so much and the Shed would not be what it is today without his input.

“Huge thanks must also go to Bill Core and former Chairman, Alex Storrie—two of our founding members for everything they have done. I cannot take credit for any of what has happened in the past and can only do my best as I take it forward.

“I started to get more and more involved. Some people think you need a trade behind you to help out or attend a Men’s Shed but you really don’t. I now had a place that I could utilise my management and organisational skills and in July 2023, was elected as Chairman.

“There are a lot of talented men in our Shed with no prima donnas - everyone is equal, no one is more important than anyone else and we all muck in to clean the toilets and wash the dishes. We have a local celebrity that attends our Shed – former Radio Clyde DJ Dave Marshall – and he has zero interest in any special treatment or recognition – he just wants to be a Shedder.

“We have around 80 members – young and old, the oldest being 82. There is the happy guy, the grumpy guy, the sleepy guy and the mix just works! We provide a wide range of social activities including a ukulele group, laser printing, sewing group, woodwork and model railway club. We are always open to trying new activities requested by the members. Last year, we trialled an afternoon social opening with board games but unfortunately there was not much take up however, we may offer this again though the winter months.

“On our committee we have Robert Humphrey, our Secretary, who really is the glue that keeps it all together and our Treasurer Ross runs the accounts exceptionally well. Once a month, we hold an informal meeting



and any member is free to join us and we hear an update from all the different sections.

We are currently implementing more forms like job sheets to be a bit more professional. There have been a few teething problems but it is working to improve our processes.

“We have had to put a cap on our membership of late. Our facilities are fantastic and a fair size, we are extremely lucky to have secured a peppercorn rent through East Renfrewshire Council and have four units knocked into one, and we have no plans to expand or move. We all want to stay where we are. Potential new members are however, more than welcome to come along and check out the facilities and be put on a waiting list. We cannot guarantee a membership straight away but would also never turn anyone away.

“It’s a double-edged sword as the Shed is a much bigger success than we ever dreamed of. I always say though that we are not running Barrhead Men’s Shed PLC here, we have to be realistic – the bigger we get, the bigger the bills.

“Yes, we have to carry out projects to raise funds however our primary function, the reason we are all here and volunteer our time, is to meet the needs of our members, improve men’s health and wellbeing and reduce social isolation and loneliness.

“I am a perfect example of how a Men’s Shed can improve the lives of men. Cancer changed everything for me and it felt like a death walking away from my company and ambitions. I didn’t want to just stay home and do nothing. I have gone from feeling lost and suicidal to now having an extremely positive outlook for the future. I feel valued here and have a purpose.”

# IN REMEMBRANCE

## Bridge of Don Shedder honoured with memorial shield

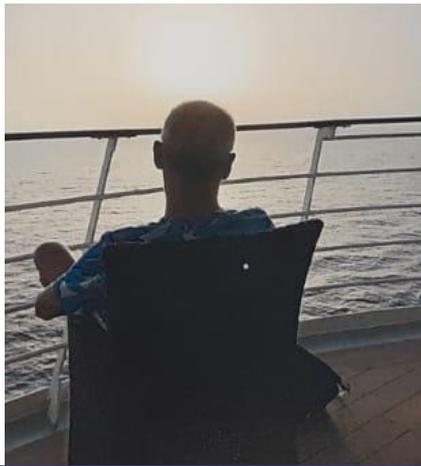
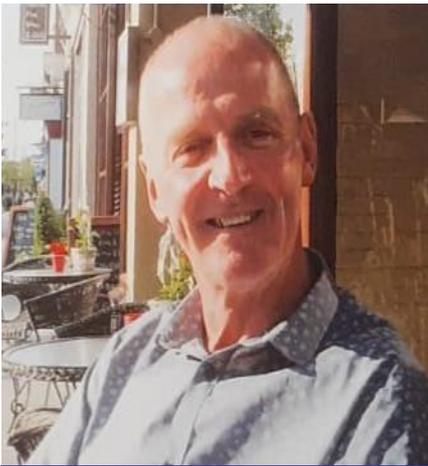
It is with great sadness that the [Bridge of Don and District Men's Shed](#) announce the passing of one of its men, Willie Sim.

Willie joined the Shed back in May 2021 and quickly became a popular member and friend. With his previous experience as an Aircraft Technician in the Royal Air Force, Willie's engineering and woodcraft skills were invaluable and he was always eager to participate in a wide variety of Shed projects including the Shed's monthly Farmers Market.

Eric Bisset from Bridge of Don Men's Shed said: "Willie sadly passed away

at home, at the age of 69, on Saturday 9th September 2023. As a sports fanatic, Willie passionately played football in the RAF, and with his family's full blessing, his fellow Shed members have started up an annual tournament in his memory entitled 'The Willie Sim Memorial Shield'.

"The inaugural tournament took place earlier this month on the 7th November 2023 and the Sheddars participated in a Sports Night with rounds of 'friendly' pool and darts. Member Mike Park was announced the winner and presented with the engraved shield which he will keep until next year's tournament. A fitting way to remember Oor Willie."



## Milngavie and Bearsden Shedder Bill Pollock remembered

[Milngavie and Bearsden Men's Shed](#) member Bill Pollock (pictured left), who sadly passed away last year, had donated a bench to Bearsden Golf Club a number of years ago.

The bench was regularly used on the course for golfers to have a rest however, was in need of some TLC and some minor repairs.

Shed Secretary Hamish Livingstone said: "Bill's fellow Shed members completed the repairs and returned the restored bench to its rightful place back on the golf course for everyone to enjoy again.

"The project generated many discussions about Bill, the good times we had with him and the laughter he brought to the Shed. He is fondly remembered."



# SHED PROJECTS

## The heat is on... in the potting shed

During a recent visit to collect the 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' target trophy from last year's winner, [Men's Shed Govan](#), SMSA CEO Jason Schroeder spotted their innovative solar solution to heat their potting shed this winter with the added bonus of generating electricity for lighting.

Shed Chairman Martin Haddow, advising Jason on their latest project, said: "By simply recycling some old cans, we have created a solar air heater and been able to heat and harvest power for our two lights in our potting shed.

"We created a vertical wooden frame with stacked soda cans with holes drilled in the top and bottom to create long metal heating tubes. Everything was painted black—as black surfaces absorb more sunlight—and glass was placed on the front of the frame.

"As the cans get warmer from the sun, the air passes through them from bottom to top and through our solar vent fan—which we created using an old computer fan run from a solar panel on the roof of the shed. The heat is then dispersed throughout the shed by the fan during the day and keeps our members cosy during this activity."

There are many videos on You Tube to assist other Sheds on how to tackle this project and a step-by-step guide can be viewed on the [Instructables website](#) or give Men's Shed Govan a call or a visit to check it out for yourself.



## Project for man's best friend

The local dogs of Buckie are being treated to their very own drinking station thanks to a team of Shedders at [Buckie Men's Shed](#).

Bill, Fred and Sean created the top-notch wooden dog water station with inset stainless steel wooden bowls—one of their first projects to take place at their new Shed at 19a High Street. The members have also been helping out at the local secondary school dismantling a couple of gazebos for the winter and have many other community projects in the pipeline.



## Wheelchair adjustment at Milngavie & Bearsden

When the side panels of a [Milngavie and Bearsden](#) Shedder's wheelchair were too low causing dirt from the wheels to mark his clothes, his fellow Shedders stepped in to fix it.

Hamish Livingstone, Secretary of Milngavie and Bearsden Men's Shed said: "The side panels were replaced with higher ones made from acrylic to prevent our member Alan's clothes touching the wheels. It was quickly done in a team effort

involving Charles, Malcom and Jim K. Job well done, colour coordinated and so appreciated by Alan."

Other projects at the Shed include fixing a honey separator belonging to another member—a faulty switch was identified and the unusual piece of kit generated a lot of interest.

A small team also completed the installation of their new extractor fan. Charles fitted the exterior grill while Neil C completed the internal fit and wiring. The fan is now fully operational.



# SHED PROJECTS

## Scottie Dog sculpture gifted to Carse of Gowrie Men's Shed

At the SMSA's national gathering earlier this month, the venue host [Carse of Gowrie Men's Shed](#) was presented with their very own 'mini' Scottie Dog sculpture by artist Rio Moore in recognition of their members' hard work carried out on the ['Scotties By The Sea'](#) project.

Over an intense three-week period, the Shedders manufactured and assembled all 32 two metre x 1 metre bases - a total of 170 sections all screwed together and painted) for all the dogs to sit on. Bill Beckers from the Shed said: "It was quite a rush to get

the bases completed in time, we were still painting the last one when they were uplifting the rest but we did it and are delighted to have been a part of this project for a very worthy cause."

The 32 giant Scottie Dog sculptures—all individually painted by local artists—form a large-scale public art trail in St Andrews and the Northeast Fife Coastal Community and will be auctioned to raise vital funds for the Maggie's Centre to support people living with cancer.

One of the dogs, 'Woof' (pictured far right), unfortunately got swept out to sea but was back in the comfort of the Shed and was being given some TLC by the artists to restore him and get him back on the trail.



## Stanley Men's Shed helps stop minks in their tracks

The [Scottish Invasive Species Initiative](#) – an exciting and ambitious partnership project set up to tackle invasive non-native species alongside rivers and watercourses in northern Scotland—was delighted to take delivery of 20 mink monitoring rafts from [Stanley Men's Shed](#) to help

with their [Mink Control Project](#).

Jane Hamilton from the SISI said: "These will come in very handy to replace any lost or damaged gear after the recent bad weather - and to set up new volunteers. This set will be going out around Tayside but we're currently working to expand our mink network all across our [project area](#). [Get in touch](#) if you'd like to get involved!"

## Lanark Shedder calls time on waste

Nothing goes to waste in Men's Sheds and that was certainly the case at Lanark Men's Shed with their latest quirky project.

Shed Chairman Alan Ross said: "We never like to throw anything away in our Shed.

"One of our members, Les, spruced up these old spanners, saving them from landfill, and designed and created this wonderful industrial-style clock to adorn the wall in our new Shed premises at the New Lanark World Heritage site.



# SHED PROJECTS

## Forres Sheddars raise funds for cancer at Doors Open Day

[Forres and District Men's Shed](#) raised a spectacular £425 for Macmillan Cancer Support during Doors Open Days 2023. The Shed welcomed 30+ people during the event on Saturday 23rd September

2023 and guests were treated to tea, coffee and donuts donated by their local Tesco and had a chance to find out more about the Shed.

Funds (£212) were raised through the sale of their items and donations from their guests and the Shed then match funded this to make the grand total donation to Macmillan.



## Double donation boost for Carse of Gowrie Men's Shed

[Carse of Gowrie Men's Shed](#) has received a £1,500 donation from [The Barratt Foundation](#), a stand-alone charity representing Barratt Homes, David Wilson Homes and Barratt London, across all of its charitable work.

The Shed hosted a visit and tour from Barratt representatives to show them a typical day in the Shed and offer the opportunity to chat to Trustees and members.

The Shed also received £1,000 from the Perth and Kinross Health and Social Care Partnership to promote mental health and wellbeing which they have ring-fenced for physiotherapy sessions for the members.



## Restoration project tackled with 170+ years' experience

When a local community group leader brought in a damaged 1879 Singer Sewing Machine and a broken flute stand to [Clyde Coast & Cumraes Men's Shed](#), the Shed utilised the skills of two Sheddars, with over 170 years' experience between them, to breathe new life into these beloved items.

Shed Chairman Ian Murdoch said: "Our members, 82-year-old George and 92-year-old Allister, stepped up to the challenge to carry out this very special restoration project.

"The sewing machine required a new piece to complete an invisible repair and it also needed to be stained and

polished in a way that it would look natural and untouched. The flute stand had a piece that was completely missing. A new piece was made and all of the parts were polished and stained to look as original as possible.

"The lady owner was absolutely delighted with the completed items restored to their former glory."

## Expansion plans for 2024

Clyde Coast & Cumraes Men's Shed has exciting and ambitious plans to expand in 2024. The Shed is currently going through the Community Asset Transfer process with North Ayrshire Council to take over the Brisbane Centre on Bath Street. Watch this space.

# SHED PROJECTS

## Milngavie and Bearsden Shedder helps students get on the fast track to STEM success

A [Milngavie and Bearsden Men's Shed](#) member has been working with a young student on a school project that will take them from classroom to competition.

The [F1 in Schools Project](#) aims to introduce students to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) subjects in an engaging way—through the creation of a miniature F1 car.

F1 in Schools is an educational project like no other. Designed for teachers, informed by engineers, and endorsed by F1 and provides a lot of fun along the way.

Creating their own version of an F1 team, students work together in groups of 3-6 and assign roles and responsibilities. Each individual takes ownership of a specific area, such as designing the car, manufacturing it, testing it, branding it, or even becoming the Team Principal to project manage everything from start to finish.

Once they have developed their car and project work, they are able to compete in events, where they race against other teams, as well as presenting to a team of judges, comprised of industry professionals and sometimes even members of F1 teams!



Milngavie and Bearsden Shedder Neil has been working with student Joe to build the model car's chassis on the Shed's CNC machine as part of their school's entry to the competition this month. Neil said: "This is our first time being involved with the project, and it has been a steep learning curve for both the school and ourselves!"

"The CNC machine was pushed to its limits and will now undergo some maintenance based on the issues we found. This, and some hoped-for upgrades, will enhance its capabilities, so next time, we can all be a wee bit more involved. We wish the Boclair students great success at their regional level and hope they make it all the way to compete against other countries in the Aramco F1 in Schools World Finals."

**Competition Result Update:** Boclair Academy successfully competed in the first competition—with the third fastest car overall—and will now progress to the next round in the new year. Well done Boclair Academy!



**Stonehaven & District Men's Shed's hobby room in full swing**



# MEN'S HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH: PROSTATE CANCER

*One of the aims of the SMSA is to support men's health and the options available. We do not support any medical process, intervention or products and in line with this we are sharing this latest information and scientific breakthroughs for you to investigate if you so choose to give you more informed options.*

Prostate cancer, the most common cancer amongst men in Scotland (\*Source, Prostate Scotland), can affect 1 in 10 men. As November is Men's Health awareness month, Dr Abdulla Alhasso, Clinical Oncologist and Prostate Cancer expert at The Beatson Cancer Centre encourages men to make themselves aware of the early signs of prostate cancer and to be confident in seeing their GP if they are in any way concerned.

Prostate cancer can be very manageable if identified early. Aside to prostate cancer, men should also be aware of other common urology conditions such as 'enlarged prostate or Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH)', again a very manageable condition. What's important is to [know the symptoms](#) and when to see your GP for advice.

## Prostate Cancer Treatment

While surgery to remove the gland is one option, typical treatment plans include a high dose of radiotherapy that aims to

effectively kill cancer cells so they cannot spread any further. This involves blasting the prostate with powerful X-ray beams that destroy cancer tumour cells. Due to the prostate being close to other organs and tissues, such as the rectum, there is a risk of long-term damage and side effects such as rectal pain, bowel and urinary leakage or incontinence and sometimes erectile dysfunction.

Dr Abdulla Alhasso, commenting on a new advancement improving the quality of life outcomes for men, said: "SpaceOAR® Hydrogel (Boston Scientific) is a major step forward to improve on the quality of radiation therapy for prostate cancer patients. It can help to significantly reduce the toxicities associated with prostate radiotherapy and thus improves on the therapeutic ratio and quality of life. This significant positive impact together with the simplicity of the insertion procedure make it a very attractive strategy for both prostate cancer patients as well as for the treating physicians to consider. SpaceOAR® Vue Hydrogel is another step forward and a higher level of technology that adds additional value to this technique as it is designed to improve on the accuracy of imaging during planning and subsequent treatment."

The Beatson West of Scotland Cancer Centre, Glasgow is the first NHS centre in

Scotland to implement this within a new pilot service for selected eligible prostate cancer patients as part of their radiotherapy treatment. The pilot service has been established thanks to generous charity funding from The Beatson Cancer Charity and White Lily charity and led by Dr. Abdulla Alhasso, Consultant Clinical Oncologist (NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde) alongside Mr. Imran Ahmad, Consultant Urological Surgeon (NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde). To date, more than 60 men have benefitted from this innovative therapy, which reduces the risk of radiotherapy related side-effects such as bowel issues, urinary incontinence and erectile dysfunction.

SpaceOAR®, a water-based hydrogel is inserted into the space between the prostate and rectum, creating about 1cm of space. This allows the prostate cancer specialist to deliver radiation to the prostate and reduce exposure to surrounding healthy tissues, with positive patient outcomes globally and at median 3 years, SpaceOAR® Hydrogel reduced declines in bowel quality of life by 70%.

"The procedure is performed during a short outpatient appointment prior to commencing radiotherapy with patient satisfaction data showing positive feedback" said Dr. Alhasso. More information can be found at [www.spaceoar.co.uk](http://www.spaceoar.co.uk)

**Boston Scientific**  
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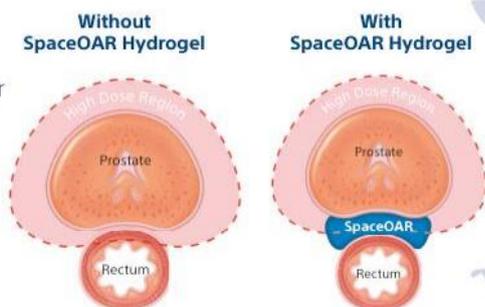
## SpaceOAR™ Hydrogel may minimise potential side effects of prostate cancer radiation therapy<sup>1,2</sup>

**Did you know that 1 in 8 men in the UK may be diagnosed with Prostate Cancer?<sup>3</sup>**

With 84% of men predicted to survive 10 years or longer in the UK<sup>4</sup>, there is focus on maintaining quality of life after treatment.

Results from the 2020 NPCA Prospective Audit found that 1 in 10 men experienced a severe gastro-intestinal complication within 2 years after radical radiotherapy.<sup>5</sup>

To learn more visit [www.spaceoar.co.uk](http://www.spaceoar.co.uk)



Please scan the QR code to find a Prostate Cancer Specialist in your locality.

1. Mariados N, Sylvester J, Shah D, et al. Hydrogel spacer prospective multicenter randomized controlled pivotal trial: Dosimetric and clinical effects of perirectal spacer application in men undergoing prostate image guided intensity modulated radiation therapy. *Int J Radiat Oncol Biol Phys.* 2015 Aug 1;92(5):971-7.
2. Karsh LI, Gross ET, Piezonka CM, et al. Absorbable hydrogel spacer use in prostate radiotherapy: A comprehensive review of phase 3 clinical trial published data. *Urology.* 2018 May; 115:39-44.
3. About prostate cancer. Prostate Cancer UK. <https://prostatecanceruk.org/prostate-information-and-support/risk-and-symptoms/about-prostate-cancer>.
4. Anon, 2020. Prostate cancer survival statistics. Cancer Research UK. <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/cancer-statistics/statistics-by-cancer-type/prostate-cancer/survival>.
5. Payne H, Clarke N. Results of the NPCA Prospective Audit in England and Wales for Men diagnosed from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 (published January 2021).

SpaceOAR Hydrogel is intended to temporarily move the rectal wall away from the prostate during the course of radiotherapy treatment for prostate cancer, and in creating this space it is the intent of SpaceOAR Hydrogel to reduce the radiation dose affecting the rectum. SpaceOAR Hydrogel contains polyethylene glycol (PEG). As with any medical treatment, there are some risks involved with the use of SpaceOAR Hydrogel. Potential complications associated with SpaceOAR Hydrogel include, but are not limited to: pain associated with injection, pain or discomfort from the hydrogel, site inflammation, infection (including abscess), inability to urinate, urgent need to urinate, constipation, rectal muscle spasm, damage to lining of rectum, ulcers, fistula (a hole between rectum and bladder, urethra, or skin below the scrotum), perforation (hole in prostate, bladder, urethra, rectum), necrosis (dead tissue), allergic reaction (local reaction or more severe reaction, such as anaphylaxis), embolism (blood vessel blockage is possible and may happen outside of the pelvis, potentially impacting vital organs or legs), fainting, and bleeding. Please talk to your doctor about the risks and benefits related to using SpaceOAR Hydrogel. If one or more of these complications occur, you may need medical treatment or surgery. URO-1288805-AA. The content of this page is for information purposes only and does not mean for product promotion or medical diagnostic. This information does not constitute medical or legal advice, and Boston Scientific makes no representation or warranty regarding this information or its completeness, accuracy or timeliness. Accordingly, Boston Scientific strongly recommends that you consult with your physician on all matters pertaining to your health or to address any questions. CAUTION: The law restricts these devices to sale by or on the order of a physician. Indications, contraindications, warnings, and instructions for use can be found in the product labelling supplied with each device or at [www.IFU-BSCI.com](http://www.IFU-BSCI.com). Products shown for INFORMATION purposes only and may not be approved or for sale in certain countries. This material is not intended for use in France. URO-1649501-AA Printed in Germany by medicalvision.



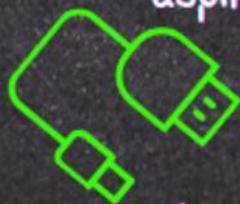
# MAKING IT



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All applicants must be over 18\*



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\*under 18's apply via a parent/guardian

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Contact your Account Manager or Call **0800 338877** | Email **north@cromwell.co.uk** | **cromwell.co.uk**

**Simple Process:** Interested SMSA Shed members should contact [admin@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:admin@scottishmsa.org.uk) to receive an application form to complete and return. The Cromwell team will then process the account with the special group discount and send the Shed their login details.

The SMSA acknowledges and express our sincere thanks to our partners and funders for their support in 2023 for the development and growth of the Men's Shed Movement in Scotland:



# Support the SMSA

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

**Make a direct donation to the Association:**



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



**Fundraising and social media events**

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

**Legacy donation**

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

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

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