

THE SCOTTISH SHEDDER

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE SMSA



SCOTLAND'S LARGEST
MEN'S HEALTH & WELLBEING CHARITY

In Scotland, For Scotland



Edition 43 | April 2025

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

cover story

- 11** 'Shed in the Spotlight'
Stewarton Community Shed

news

- 4** Scottish Men's
Shed of the Year
Awards
- 6** Is your Shed
Findable?
- 7** Development
Updates

features

- 10** Gift a cup of
kindness
- 12** New Sheds on
the Block
- 13** Shed Life
- 23** Personal Stories

projects

- 27** Barrhead's funeral
home restoration
project
- 28** Fraserburgh
Shed's model
railway
- 30** First Shed project
for Inch & Leslie

health matters

- 31** Men Matter
Scotland

opportunities

- 32** Soap Box Derby
- 33** Prostate FFIT

The Scottish Shedder magazine promotes the latest news from the SMSA and Men's Sheds across Scotland to inform and inspire others. The magazine is sent digitally every second month to over 4,300 Individual Member subscribers and supporters of the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement.

Send a contribution

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Friday 13th June 2025

Subscribe

To receive 'The Scottish Shedder', you must become an SMSA Individual Member (free)

CONTACT THE SHEDITOR:

Michelle Wibrew
SMSA Communications & PR Officer
07389061498 | comms@scottishmsa.org.uk



The SMSA cannot accept any responsibility for claims made by external parties. The content does not necessarily represent the views of the publisher or imply any endorsement.

No part of this publication should be reproduced in any form without prior agreement from the SMSA

SCOTTISH MEN'S SHEDS ASSOCIATION
BANCHORY BUSINESS CENTRE
BURN O'BENNIE ROAD, BANCHORY
ABERDEENSHIRE, AB31 5ZU

info@scottishmsa.org.uk
www.scottishmsa.org.uk



Bancon Homes



BANK OF SCOTLAND
Foundation

CREAR
TRUST



TALKING SHEDS

It still continues to amaze me how diverse my job is and the many levels of society I now engage with where Scottish Men's Sheds are a quiet and powerful solution to the many dilemmas we face in our day-to-day lives. As services collapse around us which before were a given and are no longer or were never realised and in silence we suffered for generations.

I was recently personally invited by the First Minister of Scotland to an important conference in The Merchant House in Glasgow. The summit centred on four key themes:

- Actively combatting the rise of inequality and discrimination and working to secure equality of outcome for all
- Tackling the rise of misinformation in a digital age, and instead ensuring a strong and trusted media environment
- Being vigilant to electoral interference and ensuring healthier and more active democratic participation
- Enhancing trust in politics and boosting the transparency and accountability of political leaders and democratic institutions

Kaukab Stewart MSP, our Minister for Equalities, the portfolio which Scottish Men's Sheds and the SMSA funding sits under, was also present and I managed to have a conversation with her after the visit we organised to the Inverclyde Shed a few weeks ago for her.

I am encouraged that the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement and the SMSA as its representative is being seen as part of the solution to the democracy challenges in Scotland as men from all walks of life are meeting, sharing and improving their lives through compassion, kindness and camaraderie by this top level of Scottish Government as a community engagement and empowerment movement.

Now, we only need the investment side to become a reality to really support and grow this incredibly success model of male health and equality as we see by the Irish and Australian Governments.

We have received funding from the Scottish Government for 2025/26 but however even though the demand for our services continues to grow, at an exponential rate to 200+ Shed groups, our funding has stalled at the 2016 start-up level. If there are any other funders and philanthropists who align with our vision and values and can offer financial support, legacies etc please do [get in touch](#) with me and/or visit our [donation page](#).

Talking of men's health, I recently met with a few organisations and it's important to help connect the dots and create partnerships, co-production and sign posting relationships so you and your members know these opportunities exist to help you when and if needed.

Unfortunately, Scotland still has the highest rate of suicide and the increase of anti-depressants for men is a worrying trend that also continues to grow. The Men's Sheds Movement is a direct preventative health model which quietly addresses our life issues and by its nature, without any fuss or fan fare, becomes the solution for many across sixteen countries. I had a very informative meeting with Barrie Hunter, [Penumbra](#) Mental Health with a role based in the Scottish Government's Suicide Prevention Strategy and a visit to the incredible HQ of [Men Matter Scotland](#) in Drumchapel (see [page 31](#)).

These are often subjects not spoken about because they are emotionally charged and difficult. However, if we don't shed light on them and come up with new preventative strategies as well as the 'reactionary' ones we will continue to support the toxic 'Strong and Silent' male narrative so many of us have been brought up with and believe that is the ultimate male model of cultural acceptance and hero status. This could not be further from the truth and often leads into isolation, misery, depression and suicide.

Scottish Sheds improve quality of life and therefore one doesn't spiral down into the abyss when the hard times arrive at your doorstep because you have already created a new lifestyle of mates and purpose and you are not alone. Also, that might never happen to you but it might to a mate in the Shed and then you are there to support the conversations—a problem shared is a problem halved is good wisdom.

We as men just have to encourage ourselves and each other not to see that this is a weakness but a very healthy new solution. We know that if one is in a safe environment, vulnerability can emerge, deep bonds of friendship and trust are formed and we find this environment in Sheds and why they are a protected space for men and need to remain so.

I was interviewed by Eileen West for River Dee Radio's Wild West Show where I had the opportunity to share the story behind the SMSA and the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement and many of the hot topics Sheddors are faced with by a society who doesn't understand why this movement has been created in the first place. Grab a cuppa, settle down for a wild deep dive

into my world of the Shed Movement, what I experienced in my own life and how I believed the Shed model could be a solution to my struggles for healthy male connection in a foreign land. We have made it available through our [SMSA YouTube channel](#). Subscribe, if you haven't already, so you don't miss our content.

Earlier this month we had some confusion with our members being asked to fill in a research study from an English University which could financially benefit the UKMSA. We sent out an email clarifying the situation as we do our own research in Scotland and if you haven't submitted it, you can [complete our survey here](#).

I had a Zoom meeting with the researcher and the head of his department and it wasn't their intention to create any issues between the two organisations which unfortunately do still exist and their past CEO never mentioned that we even exist in their conversations. We continue to ask the UKMSA to change their name to the more accurate English Men's Sheds Association as we have done since 2018 which would stop a lot of confusion amongst the public, Sheddors and funders.

Unfortunately, it affects us negatively as we are 'In Scotland For Scotland' only with no interest in any other countries members. Their new CEO starts I believe in May and when she has her feet under the desk and the dust has settled I shall again have another conversation—we will keep you posted.

Last but not least, the SMSA Shed of the Year Awards 2025 are open (see [page 4](#)) and this year we have a slightly different format. We have introduced a regional round and a different voting procedure for only SMSA Individual Shed members to vote and not the public. Much discussion has been had about this over the years as to if the public 'get' Sheds as Sheddors definitely do. So we will try out this new format and check in with you afterwards again to see if we should keep it. We are looking forward to receiving your applications, don't be shy lads, you are amazing and we want to support you!

Jason Schroeder
SMSA Chief
Executive Officer



Scottish Men's Shed of the Year 2025

The Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) – Scotland's largest member-led men's health and wellbeing charity - has launched its 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' 2025 awards programme to applications from Scottish Men's Sheds with a new regional twist.

The SMSA's awards programme is now in its seventh year and endeavours to recognise, reward and promote the contribution Sheds make to our communities across Scotland and the huge life-changing impact that they have on the men that attend them.

SMSA CEO Jason Schroeder, said: "The awards began back in 2019 and the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement has grown considerably since then. Now, with the engagement of 10,000+ men through over 200 open or developing Shed groups across all 32 local authority areas (identified on our online '[Find a Shed' map](#)), we felt it was definitely time for a rejig of the process to simplify it and make it more appealing to encourage more Sheds to apply.

"We have listened to our members' feedback and introduced [five regional categories](#) East Coast (North), East Coast (South), West Coast (North), West Coast (South) and Highlands & Islands and will have one regional winner for each. This way, five Scottish Sheds will receive the prestige of a regional title as well as be in the running for the winner's title.

"In previous years, applications were 'blind judged' by the SMSA Board—meaning that all references to places, names etc were removed beforehand to ensure unbiased decisions and scoring by the SMSA Trustees. With this new process, we will assign one SMSA Development Officer (DO), who works outwith that region, along with one SMSA Trustee to review the applications and decide on a finalist for each of the five regions.

"In addition to the new regional heats, we revisited the application process. Everyone dislikes completing lengthy

application forms and with our new and improved process, we have streamlined our online application and stripped it right back to just two key qualitative questions to get down to the nitty gritty of the impact that these Sheds are making to their members and communities. We have also added in a choice for Sheds to send in video responses to the questions, instead of written answers, and involve their fellow members and Trustees and stakeholders in their film making.

"It is important to emphasise that applicant Shed's do not need to have been open for several years or be non-stop in the newspapers. As we have seen from our 2023 and 2024 double winner - new 'Shed on the Block' Banff, Macduff and District Men's Shed - you could have newly opened or be a developing Shed and still make an immense positive impact in your local community."

The application window for 2025 opened on Monday 14th April and will close at noon on Friday 18th July. Scottish Sheds, that are members of the SMSA, can [apply online](#). Five regional Sheds will be selected by Friday 25th July. Three finalist Sheds will be announced the week of the 4th August before opening to voting from SMSA individual members on Friday 29th August before closing on Friday 19th September.

The winner and two runner-up Sheds will be announced at the SMSA gathering, AGM and awards event on Friday 3rd October 2025 at Perth & Kinross Council Chambers. Fourth and fifth place Sheds will receive the regional title, a certificate and £250 towards Shed running costs from the SMSA. The three finalist Sheds will receive their own regional title, large trophy, certificate and an array of prizes from SMSA and awards sponsors and supporters to support their Shed.

FIND OUT MORE AND APPLY ONLINE



2023 & 2024 Winner: Banff, Macduff & District Men's Shed

Facts & Figures

10,267

MEN ATTENDING SHEDS
ACROSS 32 LOCAL
AUTHORITIES

4,363

SMSA INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

162

SMSA SHED
MEMBERS

138

SHEDS OPEN ACROSS
SCOTLAND

65

SHEDS CURRENTLY IN
DEVELOPMENT

SHEDLOADS OF OPPORTUNITIES



FUNDING | CONSULTATIONS | CONNECTIONS | OPPORTUNITIES

'Shedloads of Opportunities' has moved online

'Shedloads of Opportunities', the SMSA's roundup of all of relevant funding, consultations, connections and opportunities open to Scottish Men's Sheds, has moved online.

Formerly an email bulletin sent out every two months, the jam-packed publication has now moved to the Resources section of the SMSA website—accessible to the Shed contacts registered with the SMSA.

Instead of SMSA Member Sheds waiting to receive the bulletin every few months, the SMSA will now keep an online directory of the latest and open opportunities for Sheds to read through and apply to the ones relevant to them. As new opportunities are announced, the SMSA will update the webpage at the team's earliest convenience and remove expired opportunities to keep the page as updated as possible to save members' precious time.

Just another benefit to SMSA Shed Membership!

Do we get the thumbs up?

Has your Shed received support from the SMSA or a Shed visit from one of our Development Officers recently? If so, we want to hear your thoughts.

Please let the SMSA know what you think of our support services so we can continue to meet the needs of our members:

<https://scottishmsa.org.uk/smsa-support-evaluation>



PRINT A HARD COPY OF THE SCOTTISH SHEDDER MAGAZINE FOR YOUR SHED'S SOCIAL AREA

The SMSA recommends that Scottish Men's Sheds have a hard copy of The Scottish Shedder magazine available in your social areas for members, that are not online, to read in the Shed and also have a library of past issues.

All previous issues of The Scottish Shedder magazine are available to [download here](#) (log-in required)

KEEP YOUR DETAILS UP-TO-DATE 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](#)





Survey: The Impact of Scottish Men's Sheds

Probably the most important consultation Scottish Shedders will ever complete!

The SMSA has devised an ongoing [consultation](#) to measure the impact of Scottish Men's Sheds. Whilst we have received hundreds of responses—we still want more!

The ongoing survey helps analyse Shedders' personal experiences of the Shed model and ethos and evaluate some statements on the benefits to health and wellbeing.

This important research will not only support the SMSA to report on the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement but will also aid Scottish Sheds to share these findings with their local communities to attract and reach more men. The statistics will also be key when applying for funds to promote the vital work taking place in Scottish Men's Sheds.

For the purpose of this vital project, the SMSA obtained a license from the internationally-recognised [Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale](#) to enable the measuring of mental wellbeing and the evaluation of a project which aims to improve mental wellbeing.

Please take 10 minutes to complete the survey, you can remain anonymous if you prefer. Thank you in advance for your support for the SMSA and the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement.

Click here to take our survey

Is your Men's Shed findable? Get your Shed on the map!

Over the years, the SMSA team has found some Sheds easier to find than others during our visits. Some are nestled away in quiet or rural locations that are not so easy to find for a non-local or someone who has just moved to the area. Your potential new members could be experiencing the same so...here are some simple handy tips to make sure your Shed is on the map, quite literally.

Google maps/social media listings

Optimising your Shed's listings on Google maps and social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, X, Instagram etc) is one of the most powerful ways to grow your Shed's presence and raise awareness online. Google uses various methods to pinpoint locations, including GPS, Wi-Fi, and mobile network signals however, we have known it to go wrong sometimes and get confused with postcodes that serve multiple addresses. It is important to review this information regularly and also ensure that more than one Shed member/trustee can access/manage the profile. You can also choose and claim a short name and URL for your listing e.g. /OchAyeTheNooShed. Make sure your Shed stands out with a [free Google profile](#) where you will be asked for key information such as address (you can pinpoint your exact location yourself as owner of the profile), contact details, web address and personalise it with your opening hours, posts and photos.



SMSA 'Find a Shed' online map

Is your Shed on the [SMSA 'Find a Shed' map](#)? This online map receives thousands of hits each month from potential Shedders and their family and friends searching for their local Shed in addition to individuals, businesses and funders looking to work in partnership and/or donate materials, funds and items to Sheds. The map is also one of the first ports of call for the SMSA team to direct any enquiries therefore it is imperative that your Shed's details are kept up-to-date on a regular basis in regard to your group's name, address, contact details, opening times and current status (e.g. proposed group, developing group, open Shed or closed down Shed). Visit <https://scottishmsa.org.uk/find-a-shed> to add, check and/or update your Shed's details today.

what3words

Did you know that every 3m² of the world has been given a unique combination of three words for deliveries, navigation, emergencies and more? what3words is a great tool to promote your Shed's precise location with just three words. Visit <https://what3words.com> to generate and promote your Shed's location with pinpoint accuracy.

And lastly, have a quick Google!

Have you ever had a wee Google of your Shed to see what pops up in the first few listings? To see what someone looking for your Shed will see? There can often be out-of-date details such as old webpages (e.g. local community health webpages that promote your Shed's services) that point to former locations or incorrect opening days and times. It is important to take the time to check this information—and reach out to website owners to correct any discrepancies—to ensure your Shed is easily found to reach more men across Scotland.

At the latest Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Men's Shed Network Meeting, Shedders identified issues that they would like to discuss in future topic-focused meetings, these included:

- Premises—community asset transfer and planning
- Renewables—heat pumps, solar pv and battery storage
- Social prescribing and inclusion
- Safe working—policies procedures, machine competency, accident protocols and sourcing first aid and fire training
- Funding—membership fees, sponsorship, grants, gift aid and VAT
- Increasing membership and succession planning
- Community engagement
- Project ideas



Tim at Brechin Men's Shed



I also had an enlightening meeting with the Graham Galloway, CEO of [Meeting Centres Scotland](#)—an organisation that has some synergy with Men's Sheds.

Originally developed in the Netherlands, Meeting Centres are community-based centres that offer a welcoming and supportive environment for people living with dementia. They provide a range of services and activities tailored to the needs and interests of individuals with dementia and support for their families and care partners.

At Meeting Centres, individuals with dementia can participate in various social, cognitive, and physical activities designed to promote engagement, stimulation, and well-being. These activities may include arts and crafts, reminiscence therapy, music therapy, physical exercise, and educational sessions.

Meeting Centres foster a sense of belonging and community, helping individuals with dementia maintain social connections and reduce feelings of isolation.

Meeting Centres already collaborate with the Kennoway and Kirriemuir Sheds and are looking for other Sheds that might have some space they could offer for a Meeting Centre. In a similar way that Alford Men's Shed hosted the Forget-Me-Not Group in the past.

Can you find your local meeting centre on their map? Visit <https://www.meetingcentres.scot/find-your-local-meeting-centre> to have a quick search and reach out to Meeting Centres Scotland if you feel your Men's Shed could work in partnership with them.

Tim Green
SMSA East Coast Development Officer
 07493361003 | dev1@scottishmsa.org.uk

Upcoming 2025 Regional Shed Network Meetings

- **Greater Glasgow and Clyde** – Wednesday 14th May 2025 at 11am at Houston & Killellan Men's Shed
- **Ayrshire** – Wednesday 14th May 2025 at 7pm at Clyde Coast & Cumbraes Men's Shed
- **Moray** – Thursday 15th May 2025 from 10am at Fochabers Men's Shed
- **Forth Valley** – Friday 16th May 2025 from 10.30am – 1pm at Denny and Bonnybridge Men's Shed
- **Lothians** – Thursday 12th June 2025 from 10.30am at Men of Leith Men's Shed
- **Perth & Kinross** – Thursday 1st May 2025 from 10.30am at Stanley and District Men's Shed
- **Fife**—TBC



The SMSA facilitates and/or attends Regional Shed Network Meetings across Scotland to connect, support, share and learn.

Regional meetings take place for: Aberdeen City/Aberdeenshire; Angus and Dundee; Ayrshire; Fife; Forth Valley; Highlands and Islands; Greater Glasgow and Clyde; Lothians; Perth and Kinross; and Scottish Borders

If you wish to attend a Shed Network meeting in your area, please contact the [Development Officer](#) for your region.

Well, it's been a busy period over the past couple of months. I've been out and about visiting Sheds from as far south as Isle of Whithorn to the more northerly Milngavie & Bearsden, and lots in between. But let's start in the middle, shall we?

South Lanarkshire is a fine place to be on a sunny day and I found myself in the wee village of Kirkmuirhill to visit Kirkmuirhill & Blackwood Men's Shed. It was great to chat over coffee and biscuits about their plans for expansion and it turns out this has been a bit of a theme for some of the Sheds I've visited lately. Another theme has been the quite dramatic impact that Sheds are making on individual Sheddars' lives, often being the catalyst that has quite literally saved them. And Kirkmuirhill was no different.

Staying in Lanarkshire, it was heartwarming that the theme of Sheds turning lives around continued in Coatbridge Men's Shed. If you're a footy fan, this Shed can be found right behind the goal at Cliftonhill Stadium, the home of Albion Rovers, and the beautiful, raised flower beds there are giving Sheddars a new lease of life: sowing the seeds of recovery. Shooty-in.

Another Shed located in a football ground is Larkhall Men's Shed. The guys there are very happy with their new home. I chatted with the guys about the benefits of joining the SMSA, and was glad to hear that, along with Coatbridge, Larkhall intend to apply for SMSA membership. I am looking forward to giving them all the support and assistance they need to ensure that Sheddars there are thriving. At your service, guys.

Carluke and Biggar are not too far apart geographically, but let's just say I needed a map and compass to find Biggar & District Men's Shed. Again, visiting Lanarkshire during this period of fine weather has been an absolute treat. The theme of changing lives is alive and well in Carluke Men's Shed, and as well as sharing our experiences of the turnaround that has taken place in a number of Sheddars' lives, I was able to share the Suicide Awareness Toolkit with them.

It was a pleasure to work shoulder-to-shoulder with my colleague in South Lanarkshire Council's Seniors Together team, Paul Creechan, and Sheddars from Stonehouse, East Kilbride, and Kirkmuirhill & Blackwood. We also dropped into Strathaven for a pop-up Shed event aimed at generating interest in a Shed start-up in the town. To this end, we spoke at length to an enthusiastic and inspirational group of men, who think Strathaven is ready for everything that the Sheds can offer. So, let's get Strathaven connected to the movement, to ensure that men there feel the benefits of being part of something very special.

From Carluke, I then travelled further afield in the shire to Biggar & District Men's Shed. Situated in an old schoolhouse, this Shed stands in splendid isolation amongst the rolling hills of rural South Lanarkshire. An isolated location but the Sheddars there are most definitely not. This well-connected group of men enjoy all the benefits of Shed life and are making the most of their garden and surroundings to grow, build, repair and enhance their social connections and their superb space.

Finally, in the northern reaches of my patch, I delivered an MOT4Men Session at Milngavie & Bearsden Men's Shed. We talked, with lots of humour and tea and biscuits. And it wasn't intimidating in any way to have a retired GP as a participant, not at all! Joking aside, it was great to be able to refer to an expert. So, in a way, I'd like to write a prescription for the Sheddars there, and for Sheddars everywhere: talk, and then talk some more about your health. In fact, talk three times per day until symptoms ease. A problem shared is a problem halved. Until next time.

Stewart Beck
SMSA West Coast Development Officer
07765929973 | dev2@scottishmsa.org.uk



Kirkmuirhill & Blackwood



Larkhall



Carluke



Stewart with Paul Creechan



MOT4Men at Milngavie & Bearsden



Fort Augustus



Mallaig



Kinlochleven



Kinlochleven



Murdo McConnell, Thurso

After trips to Caithness and Sutherland to meet with partners, local 'movers and shakers' and keen potential Sheddars, I conducted three public meetings for potential new start-up Sheds – for Thurso, Lairg and Lochinver. A further meeting is planned for Bonar Bridge at the end of April.

A total of 25 men attended and this led to some rapid developments. Lochinver now has a committee, have identified a venue to meet and have identified various potential funders.

Thurso has looked at various buildings and through a very proactive individual (Murdo), have recruited a further 15 potential Sheddars—see case study right.

The Lairg meeting led to discussions about one Shed or two for the area. The meeting in the neighbouring Bonar Bridge will be attended by the Lairg men and this discussion will continue with attendees there. The Kyle and Sutherland Development Trust has been very helpful with tapping into networks and signposting to community activists.

Along with Brora and Lybster, that's potentially six new Sheds in development in Caithness and Sutherland.

In March, there was a regional Shed network meeting at the Inverness Shed, with 26 Sheddars from eight Sheds in attendance—Ullapool, Muir of Ord, Black Isle, Nairn, Cromarty Firth, Dingwall, Fort William and Inverness.

Excellent feedback was received from Sheds highlighting the

benefits of networking and learning with other Sheds, information sharing, being able to take information back to Shed members and trustees, seeing other Sheds and latest news and updates. A big thank you to the Inverness Shed for hosting the event, and Anne and Jo from Age Scotland for assisting and supplying lunch.

After six months of travelling around the Highlands, I've now visited all the Sheds. The last four—Fort Augustus, Kinlochleven, Mallaig and Strontian—I visited in a three-day trip in glorious spring-like weather.

I met with the Sunart Community Company in Strontian who have suggested two Sheds for the area, and I will be returning soon to follow this up.

Fort Augustus has ten enthusiastic men who meet every week in the Caledonian Canal Centre and are beaver away trying to find premises. Mallaig has a portacabin and workshop in the fish market at the pier. As someone with a fish allergy, that was an 'experience'. I arrived at Kinlochleven Shed to find a Shedder in the adjacent stream, shoring up the bank to ensure the Shed stays put during the next flood!

As always, they are all unique Sheds at different stages of development, with their own quirks, all with the common goal of improving men's lives.

Ross Murray
SMSA Highlands/Islands
Development Officer
07777134950
dev3@scottishmsa.org.uk

Case Study: Highlands and Islands Men's Sheds Development

"This is the best thing I've done in a long time. Meeting like-minded men, with a challenging goal, working together to set up a Shed, making new friends and something to get out the house for. A future, a slightly unknown future, slightly daunting, but so exciting." **Murdo McConnell, Thurso**

SMSA Development Officer Ross Murray met initially at Ormlie Community Association's centre with two staff and Murdo McConnell, who volunteers there. The staff reported that there was very little for men in the area and they are always looking for something to do, other than the pub. He talked about retired male friends, with a range of skills and interests, but few places to utilise them. Following the SMSA presentation with Sheds and Sheddars' impact stories, he said: "I'm all fired up."

"After the meeting, Murdo and Ross chatted over a coffee. A public meeting was organised and Murdo said he would like to be involved in the planning of a Men's Shed. Murdo leafleted the community with the upcoming SMSA event publicity and knocked on doors and contacted friends and acquaintances. He was buoyed by the experience and his confidence grew. He contacted venues for meetings and talked to a local councillor. Ross arranged for a number of men from Thurso to visit existing Sheds in other communities further south and supported Murdo to apply for SMSA partner funding for the learning exchange trip.

Result

At the initial public meeting, ten men signed up to be involved in the development of a Men's Shed in Thurso. Since that meeting, Murdo has signed up a further 14 men through a variety of engagements. The men have identified potential venues through collaborative outreach work and are planning to meet weekly to take the project forward. They plan to register themselves for individual SMSA memberships.

Murdo has put himself forward as Shed Secretary, "This has given me a fresh purpose in life." he said.



**SCOTTISH
MEN'S SHEDS
ASSOCIATION**



Could you donate a wee cup of kindness to help shape the future of the SMSA and the Men's Sheds Movement across Scotland?

Although there are a host of funders and organisations who already recognise the life-changing and life-saving benefits of the Men's Shed model and are currently supporting the SMSA, the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement has only reached about a third of its potential!

Gifting the SMSA the cost of a cup of coffee each month (£3), can make a HUGE difference to men's health and wellbeing across Scotland.

Help the SMSA, the national support hub for Scottish Men's Sheds, reach more men across Scotland and bring us one step closer to our vision of a Men's Shed in every single Scottish city and town.

There are many ways to support Scotland's largest member-led men's health and wellbeing charity:

- ⇒ **Set up a regular payment—donate the cost of a coffee (£3) every month**
- ⇒ **Make a direct one-off donation**
- ⇒ **Leave a gift in your will**
- ⇒ **Donate by shopping online**



Bancon Homes



BANK OF SCOTLAND
Foundation

CRERAR
TRUST



> scottishmsa.org.uk/donate



An East Ayrshire church has launched a Community Shed in its community to enable locals to learn new practical skills to make, repair and repurpose whilst combatting social isolation and loneliness and positively impact on the health and wellbeing of its members.

Stewarton Community Shed is part of the **Thrive Stewarton** initiative—set up by John Knox Parish Church and the Presbytery of the South West to support people in their 20s to 40s ‘outside the walls’ of the church.

The Shed was officially opened on the 9th March 2025 by the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland Rev Dr Shaw Paterson (pictured below centre). Overwhelming support was received by the community on opening day and community representatives including Councillor John McGhee, Depute Provost of East Ayrshire were also in attendance.

Pete Anderson from Stewarton Community Shed said: “We are delighted to announce that Stewarton Community Shed, known locally as simply ‘The Shed’, is now open on Thursdays 10am till 1pm. All welcome! The Shed’s mission statement says it all—‘Feel good about yourself, be productive, contribute to the community, connect with friends and maintain an active body, mind and soul’.”

“Connection, conversation and creation – that’s what joining a Shed is all about. This new resource in our community encourages members to work on their own and/or in a group setting in a safe and friendly environment. New members will be fully trained in safe working practices for all of our tools and equipment regardless of their previous skills and experience.

Rev Dr Paterson, who is no stranger to the value of skilled work as a former tiler described the project as a “wonderful resource” for the community and was honoured to be asked to open it.

Speaking after he cut the ribbon, the Moderator said: “Men in particular can find it hard to share how they feel. The Shed will promote good mental health by enabling people to come together and chat as they work shoulder-to-shoulder”.

Peter Anderson added that an employability project has also started at the Shed with unemployed men working on an oak town sign to be sited at the crossroads in the centre of the town. Participant James said: “I enjoy coming along to the Shed, learning new skills, making stuff and getting to know folk. I’ll be able to say... I made that!”

Not content with simply being a bystander in the workshop area on the day, Rev Dr Paterson donned safely glasses and an apron to try his hand at a spot of woodturning for himself. He said: “I echo the value of a place where activities can help with wellbeing—the value of gathering, working together, sharing knowledge and most especially having a conversation with others while working on a project”

Support Stewarton Community Shed and follow them on Facebook at [@thrivestewarton](https://www.facebook.com/thrivestewarton).

Images and story courtesy of The Shed, John Knox Parish Church and The Church of Scotland.



NEW SHEDS ON THE BLOCK



Isle of Whithorn

SMSA's West Coast Development Officer Stewart Beck dropped in to meet a group of men in the wee village of Isle of Whithorn, about as far south in Scotland as you can go. This beautiful part of the country is situated on Dumfries & Galloway's Solway coast, with stunning views out to the Isle of Man and the English Lake District.

The SMSA team was very pleased to hear that ten enthusiastic men are interested in forming a Shed

there and already have agreement to use a boathouse (under construction) at the harbour, as a shared premises.

We gave a presentation on setting up a Shed and shared lots of inspirational stories and anecdotes, accompanied by some great banter over tea and sausage rolls.

We're really looking forward to returning there when the Shed opens in the not-too-distant future.

Lochcarron and District Men's Shed

Lochcarron and District Men's Shed is delighted to announce that their facilities are officially open!

SMSA Development Officer Ross Murray visited Lochcarron Shed a few months back and this dedicated group of men in Lochcarron were installing a portacabin from R.J McLeod Contractors Ltd. in the grounds of the Howard Doris Centre and were meeting in the centre of the village beside a lovely café – very handy!

Since their first meeting in January 2024, the group has received fantastic support from the Lochcarron Centre and been beaver away to get their Shed up and running.

It has been a lot of hard work but after joining the SMSA and visiting a local Men's Shed (Broadford), they quickly realised that they did not have to reinvent the wheel and advice and support is available in the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement.

The portacabin has received a wee makeover with larch cladding to complement the surrounding landscape and provides the ideal space for members to meet.

The group is now currently working on the interior, installing electrics and creating spaces for woodwork and crafts. There is still much to do and funding to source towards running costs.

The Shed is currently open on Wednesdays and Thursday mornings from 10.30am.



Linwood Men's Shed

SMSA's Stewart Beck arrived bright and early at Linwood Shed to find the church next door open and serving up free food. Well, what else was Stewart going to do? Yes, of course, he made himself at home and had a good blether over coffee and cake until the Sheddars arrived (it's a hard life!).

Linwood Baptist Church has very kindly donated a neighbouring plot of land to the Shed and are encouraged to use their facilities. A great example of partnership working for the benefit of the

local community. The Shed has recently added a third container to the site and are doing an amazing job of fitting all three out. Stewart chatted about what SMSA can offer, funding opportunities and connecting the Shed to other Sheds locally.

We look forward to welcoming them for the first time to the next Greater Glasgow & Clyde Shed Network meeting, and doing everything we can to support this great new Shed, seeing it thrive, and throwing the doors open to men in the Linwood area.



Prince William 'makes friends and learns new skills' at Carnoustie and Monifieth Men's Shed

"Making friends. Learning new skills. Working on different projects together" read the caption accompanying the video of the Duke of Rothesay interacting with members of [Carnoustie and Monifieth Men's Shed](#) during his recent visit.

The Prince of Wales, known as the Duke of Rothesay in Scotland, visited Carnoustie and Monifieth Men's Shed in Angus as part of his efforts to breakdown any stigma around mental health and raise awareness of community projects like Men's Sheds that exist to combat boredom, social isolation and loneliness.

The heir to the throne received a tour of the Shed on the 6th February 2025, meeting many of its 26 members, before heading into the workshop. But he was not to be just a spectator. Prince William donned a Shed apron to try his hand at using some power tools. The Prince was shown how to make a 'tree hugger' in addition to helping put a nesting box together.

The group sat down with Prince William to chat to him over tea and biscuits about their Shed. The group, founded in 2015, meets on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays to take part in a range of activities such as woodwork, crafting, gardening and any activities or hobbies that members wish to partake in.

Carnoustie Men's Shed Chairman Derek Stewart, who did not sleep the night before because of his excitement, said: "It was an honour and a privilege to meet His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales.

"A lot of the discussion centred around how our Shed deals with mental wellbeing. Our Shed is a place that brings people in our community together and teaches them new skills. The majority of our members have previously struggled with isolation and loneliness.

"He is really down to earth, you can sit and talk to him, he puts you at ease as soon as you start talking."

"We are delighted that our Shed was chosen for the visit and feel hopeful it will raise awareness of our Shed, and all the other Men's Sheds out there. We are hopeful that the royal visit will encourage more people to head to the Shed. I think it will give people a better understanding of what we do."

The Prince of Wales shared footage from his visit to The Carnoustie and Monifieth Men's Shed on the [official Wales Instagram account](#) and [STV News](#) also promoted the visit on its YouTube channel.

New Shed joins the call for volunteers to tackle invasive mink in northern Scotland

As we spring into spring, breeding season for American mink is fast approaching and the Scottish Sheddars involved in the [Scottish Invasive Species Initiative's \(SISI\) Mink Control Project](#) roll up their sleeves to produce an abundance of floating mink rafts to tackle this opportunistic predator. The SISI welcomes Comrie & District Men's Shed to their large network of volunteers across northern Scotland.

Mark Purrmann-Charles (pictured below), SISI Project Officer for the Tay Catchment said: "In spring, our mink trapping network is back out in force preparing for increased mink activity. Mink become more active approaching breeding season, so it is vital we get our coverage out.

"The project works with volunteers and partners to control mink across the northern third of Scotland. Over the years, we have worked with many Scottish Men's Sheds and I would like to highlight the excellent work that they do for us across the project area, building and supplying us with the mink rafts we need. The project wouldn't function without the support from local Men's Sheds and we really appreciate all of their hard work.

"Over a season, our equipment can often be damaged in spates and floods and requires repair or to be fully replaced, and our new mink monitoring volunteers need fresh kit as well.

"The mink monitoring rafts float on the edge of a river or burn (see bottom right image), and mink—being inquisitive creatures—will come to investigate and go through the wooden tunnel. Inside the tunnel is a live capture trap or (if in monitoring mode) a clay pad, on which the mink (or any other creature) will leave its paw prints. Any mink captured in our live traps will be humanely dispatched and non-target animals are released unharmed.

"We had a record breaking year in 2024, with 242 mink captured across north east Scotland – more than we've ever had before, since the project began in 2018. Our network has increased to over 400 traps (up from 200 in 2023) and over 350 volunteers (up from 250 in 2023) but that has only been possible thanks to the Sheds building this kit for us.

"Our newest Scottish Men's Shed to get involved is [Comrie & District Men's Shed](#), who have been building rafts for me to deploy in the Tay system this season. It's been brilliant working with them and they have made a number of clever tweaks to the raft design to make it more secure and last longer.

"Most of their first batch of rafts (pictured) were immediately deployed and we are delighted to report that we've already had mink captures using their kit."



"A big thank you to all the great guys at Comrie & District Men's Shed and all the other sheds who work with us. The project wouldn't function without the help their support and we really appreciate all of their hard work."





A productive first year for Troon Men's Shed!

It's been a busy first year for Troon Men's Shed following its formation in April 2024. Despite not having their own physical Shed yet, that has by no means held them back from recruiting an impressive 70 members and holding fortnightly social gatherings and group visits to places of interest.

Secretary Troon Men's Shed Andrew Smith said: "Our membership is already thriving and we are delighted that we now have 70+ members. The Shed group has already become so popular that we have recently had to move to a new meeting venue we had outgrown our initial one.

"Our popular meetings have included guest speakers from Prostate Scotland, Troon Community Council, South Ayrshire Council Information and Advice Hub, The Fishermen's Mission and of course the Scottish Men's Sheds Association.

"We have enjoyed group visits to the Scottish Maritime Museum and also a tour of the UPM-Kymmene Oyj (UPM) Caledonian Paper Mill in Irvine, whose employees also chose us as their charity of the month in January 2025.

"We have also helped out a community events in the town, to increase our presence and raise awareness of

what the Shed has to offer, at Troon Wintertainment, the Troon Round Table fireworks display and the Santa float.

"In February, the Occupational Therapy team from NHS Ayrshire & Arran undertook a Functional Fitness MOT session with 24 of our members volunteering to be tested to give an indication of their exercise performance.

"The session also included a health questionnaire, having blood-pressure taken and a diabetes test. Participants undertook a series of cardiovascular, pulmonary, and neural function tests to measure their flexibility and strength. The 'scores' in each test were then compared with a set of 'normal values' to give an idea on the performance compared to someone of the same age and to indicate any areas where some increased activity could be of benefit.

"At present, we are busy working on a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) application to South Ayrshire Council to obtain a disused sports pavilion to bring it back for community benefit. Hopefully, we are successful and it can be developed into our permanent Shed base and adapted with practical and social spaces to meet all of our members' needs. There is certainly a lot to look forward to in our second year."

Find out more on the Troon Men's Shed [website](#) and give them a follow on [Facebook](#).



Get Saving with Axminster!

As a benefit of Shed Membership of the Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA), Sheds are entitled to a **10% discount** through the national association's partnership with Axminster, a market leader in the tools and machinery industry.

The SMSA aims to support Scottish Men's Shed to sustainability. This membership benefit saves Sheds money when buying new or replacing machines from one of the UK's biggest tool providers.

1 APPLY...



To access these savings, Shed members must email admin@scottishmsa.org.uk in the first instance to set up an exclusive SMSA/Axminster account. The SMSA will then provide you with a link to the online application form to action this.

2 SHOP...



Once the application is submitted and approved, the Axminster team will create a Shed account which entitles most Shed purchases to the discount. *All 10% discounted ordering must be done via email or over the phone (*does not apply to online orders*).

3 SAVE...



Whilst the 10% discount applies to the 'Shed' rather than 'Shedders', if the Shed is happy to manage orders from its members, then those orders can be placed through the Shed account so your members can benefit too!

Important terms, conditions and exclusions for Sheds:

**Exemptions: Products that are already on promotion and the following branded power tools—Bosch; Makita; Festool; and DeWalt—are excluded from the discount*

Delivery: Axminster's quality delivery service is free for orders over £75 to Standard UK Mainland (a premium next-day delivery is also available at an additional cost). Larger items and delivery to UK Remote & Offshore may require a specialist carrier service and custom quotation so please discuss this with a member of the Axminster sales team prior to purchasing

SIGN UP TO THE AXMINSTER EMAIL CLUB

- Join the conversation and share your passion with like-minded woodworkers
- Keep up-to-date with the latest news, products, offers and promotions from Axminster
- Receive details about upcoming Axminster events and store demonstrations direct to your inbox

axminstertools.com/email-club



Learig Amateur Orchestra's Men's Shed Fundraiser

The Learig Amateur Orchestra in Aberdeen performs three [public concerts](#) a year and on each occasion they donate surplus monies from these events to a good cause that has been proposed by their members. On Saturday 29th March 2025, the orchestra performed a spring concert of French music at Mannofield Church in Aberdeen with the proceeds going to support two of their local Men's Sheds—Midmar Men's Shed and Rosemount and Midsocket Men's Shed.

[Rosemount and Midsocket Men's Shed](#), located in Aberdeen city centre, has recently formed with a temporary home at Rosemount Community Centre where they meet every Wednesday evening. In addition to socialising, the members have arranged talks about local history, practical skills, avoiding frauds and scams and other interesting topics. They are now actively looking for a permanent home where they can establish a workshop, store tools and develop projects to meet their members' needs. Support the Shed, by following their journey on [Facebook](#).

The other beneficiary of the fundraising event was [Midmar Men's Shed](#) who, as you may recall from previous articles in The Scottish Shedder, are busy constructing their own Shed. Last year they laid all the foundations and now that spring is here, the next stage is to erect the shell and make it wind and watertight.

This has to happen to a timetable over the summer and so they are urgently fundraising to pay for materials that they cannot acquire through donation. Rob Ferguson, one of the Midmar Shed members and fundraisers, said: "The Learig Orchestra event featured some of our local Men's Shed members so it was definitely one not to be missed. On hearing the recent rehearsals for The Poeme piece alone, I knew it would be a popular event—it was certainly worth the ticket price to hear it live!

"Midmar Men's Shed is raising funds to pay for the flooring materials that we need in our new building including underfloor heating pipes, solid insulation and the finish, a self-leveling concrete screed. This contribution from Learig Orchestra concert to our Shed is extremely welcome...every penny counts to get us one step closer to our goal!"

You can follow Midmar Men's Shed's progress towards completing their Shed build through their website at <https://midmar.uk>. And, if you can help the Shed in any way please contact them directly or consider making a donation through the Shed's active [GoFundMe](#) page.





Morrison Construction gives Dornoch Men's Shed a helping hand

Morrison Construction takes its role in society seriously, working to improve Scotland's built environment and deliver lasting change for the communities it works in. The SMSA partner is proud to be working closely with Men's Sheds across Scotland that are close to their sites including [Dornoch Firth Men's Shed](#) who recently received a helping hand.

Mia Keith, who has a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) role with Morrison Construction for the Highland area, said: "We are delighted to have had a lot of uptake on our offer of support from Sheds in the Highland region."

"For example, surplus materials from the Royal Dornoch Golf Club project were donated to the Dornoch Men's

Shed and they have been able to create a new Shed with a canopy to continue their work—rain, hail or shine.

"The Dornoch Shed is doing incredible things for its local community with these donations. They have crafted mud kitchens for Ardgay Primary School and the 'Our Little Otters' outdoor parent and toddler project, planters for the Dornoch Beach Wheelchair Project's Boule Court and bird boxes made from our recycled timber. Additionally, the Shed has been crafting and donating/selling items to the local community, supporting sustainability and reuse.

"The work these Sheds do highlights the invaluable role they play in our communities - providing not only hands-on skills and creative outlets but also creating positive social impacts.

"It also highlights the importance of reusing materials over simply disposing of them, contributing to a more sustainable and circular economy."

Carluke Shedder takes on the Kiltwalk for a sixth year

For the sixth year in a row, Tom Kennedy (and his wife Wendy) from [Carluke Men's Shed](#) will be participating in the Glasgow Kiltwalk to raise funds for the Shed.

Tom Kennedy, on behalf of the CMS members said: "Every step we take during this walk is not just a personal challenge; it represents the collective strength and resilience of our community."

"The funds raised will directly contribute to creating more opportunities for men who may feel isolated or in need of support. Your generous donations will help us reach our target of £1,500 (more if physically possible) ensuring that Carluke Men's Shed can continue its vital mission.

"This will be the sixth year in a row that Wendy and I have walked to support the incredible work of our Shed. Our charity provides a welcoming space for men to come together, learn new skills and build lasting friendships.

"Our Shed recently lost another dear member, Tom Collin (pictured below right). Tom was one of our dearest members from the early days of our Shed. Back in 2019, Tom was a quiet man when he first joined us but with a wee bit of coaxing we soon got him blethering with all his new pals and he always left our get-togethers in Carluke Leisure Centre (where we were based at that time) with a smile on his face—which was great.

"It is for men like Tom that we continue to do what we do and change the lives of people in our community for the better.

"Tom will be sadly missed, gone but never forgotten. We would like to give thanks to the Collin family for inviting us to the funeral to pay our respects to our friend. And for their very kind donation from the church congregation to help with the future development of Carluke Men's Shed. Thank you—this is greatly appreciated by all our members.

"In addition to the Kiltwalk, our Shed will have a presence to raise awareness of what we do and sell some of our wares at Carluke Gala on Saturday 14th June 2025.

"Onwards and upwards."





Garnock Valley Men's Shed reopens

It feels like only moments ago that we announced that [Garnock Valley Men's Shed \(GVMS\)](#) had taken full ownership of its premises and were shortlisted for Scotland in the Pride of Britain Fund 2025.... but the good news just keeps on coming as the Shed held its relaunch event this month following a big renovation.

Back in October 2024, the Scottish Shedder announced that GVMS had secured its future when it took full ownership of its Shed premises on Ladysmith Road in Kilbirnie—purchasing it from North Ayrshire Council with a 95% discount on its value—but the time had come for some extensive renovations of the former derelict building to improve the facilities to meet the needs of its 70-strong membership.

Former GVMS Chairman and current Shed trustee David Gardner said: “Our relaunch event earlier this month on Saturday 12th April 2025 was a great success with our supporters coming out in force.

“Over the last several months, we have been clearing our workshop and painting the walls and ceilings—giving it a much-needed refresh. We then painted the floors whilst everything was clear before reinstating the benches and all of our tools. As part of the renovations, we were also able to afford the opportunity to clear out our music room to allow our members to start using it.

“Anthea Dickson, our Provost of North Ayrshire Council, performed our relaunch ceremony and cut the ribbon to mark us officially reopened. We are so fortunate to have an excellent relationship with our local council and receive continued support.

“In attendance were many of our local councillors including Donald L. Reid, Margaret Johnson and John Bell as well as council representatives Ian Murdoch, David Hammond and Lesley Forsyth. In addition to this, we were delighted to welcome along Sheddors from the

Dalry, Clyde Coast and Cumbraes and Linwood Sheds and members of the public who came along to offer their support. The SMSA was represented by West Coast Development Officer Stewart Beck who has been involved from the beginning of GVMS and we had the pleasure of the Irvine and District Pipe Band entertaining our guests.

“Just before the reopening, we were delighted to receive the news that our Shed—which was one of the five Scottish projects shortlisted in the Pride of Britain Fund 2025—had been awarded £500 to go towards the costs of the relaunch and this money helped with the catering for our guests from Irvine's Bakery in Beith. A fantastic day really was had by all.”

SMSA Development Officer Stewart Beck said: “It was so gratifying to be able to attend the relaunch of a Shed that's very close to my heart. ‘You shouldn't have favourites!’ I hear you say, and that's true, but my involvement at the early stages of GVMS, and the relationships we built there were my first associations with this phenomenon called the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement. As my experience has grown, so too has this amazing Shed, to the point where, following extensive renovations a relaunch was required.

“On this beautiful sunny day, we listened as the Provost of North Ayrshire Council paid tribute to the fantastic work done by the GVMS Sheddors in providing a lifeline for men in the Garnock Valley. Yes, it's a great building that's been enhanced, with the assistance of the local authority, that will serve the area for a long period of time to come.

“However, the beating heart of this building is the members, many of whose contributions were acknowledged as they were presented with mementoes of appreciation by the Trustees. What a great thing to be a part of! Let's hope that many more men reap the benefits of this Shed in the many years to come. Very well done guys!”

Businesses come out in force to support Penicuik Men's Shed

Several businesses have shown immense support for [Penicuik and District's Men's Shed](#). With planning consent granted, the busy Shed's plans to amalgamate three former site cabins—into a single structure featuring a social area, skills sharing workshop and toilets—the support could not have come at a better time.

Based within the grounds of The Glencorse Community Centre at Auchendinny, the Shed recently received a cheque for £250 from [Bellway Homes](#). Monoblocks, fencing materials and lighting from a decommissioned sales facility was also received from their luxury brand sister company [Ashberry Homes](#) from the adjacent Five Mills housing development.

[Armadilla](#)—a designer and builder of luxury hospitality units based in Mayfield, Dalkeith—also announced in February that they have teamed up with the Shed by passing on surplus materials from their manufacturing facility to support the Men's Shed Movement in its mission to improve Mental health in the community.

Lyn Pringle, Sales Director at Bellway Homes (Scotland South East) Ltd said “Men's Sheds are a terrific community initiative and just to have that space to meet up, is so important. Run by volunteers and completely self-funded it relies on the generosity of the local



community and businesses. The Penicuik and District Men's Shed is just going to go from strength to strength”.

Shed Chairman, David Russell said “Engaging with construction and planning professionals has been protracted and expensive, but with a building warrant imminent we're looking forward to getting started with the work and utility hookups.

“We are so grateful to Bellway, Armadilla and many others for donated cash and materials to defray our project expenses so we can progress our project and continue to provide a safe and welcoming space where a hot drink, a biscuit and a bit of company are always available”.





Inverurie Shed gets green light for expansion following appeal to community

For many years, [Inverurie & District Men's Shed](#)—which celebrates its 11th anniversary next month—has reported outgrowing its popular Shed premises and being restricted on what it can offer its members. The Shed is now delighted to announce that following support from the Inverurie community, the Shed has secured an adjoining building to meet their needs.

Chairman Alex Smith said: “As our Shed has grown in popularity and more men wish to attend over the last decade, our premises are simply not big enough.

“In May last year we appealed for help through our [Facebook](#) page as we had applied to Aberdeenshire Council for a Community Asset Transfer on the adjacent building and asked for comments to justify the need for Inverurie & District Men's Shed to expand.

“We were absolutely overwhelmed by the support and positive comments received from local residents, businesses and from the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement. The application was a success and all formalities are now complete.

“We still have a great deal of work to do before we can move equipment into the new Shed but we are over the moon. We wish to express a huge thank you to our community for supporting us!”

Kirkcaldy Shedder of the Year

The ‘Shedder of the Year’ award at [Kirkcaldy & District Men's Shed](#) this year went to 63 year-old John Campbell who joined the Shed back in 2022, just as the Shed moved into new premises, and has shown to be a great asset to the group.

Kirkcaldy & District Men's Shed has been going through a wee transformation and John has devoted many an hour to come in and keep the place tidy. When in the Shed, John goes out of his way to spend time talking to or helping others with their projects.

Saying this, John knows to prioritise his own health and wellbeing at the Shed and makes time to work on his own crafts through his wonderful stain glass work. Well done John, from everyone at the Shed, keep up the good work. The Shed appreciates all of the work that you have put in.



A very humble John said: “I was very surprised yet really pleased to receive the award. Personally, I thought there were more deserving members that should have received it but don't we all think like that. Thank you so much.”





Picture framing social enterprise to open at Mintlaw Shed

Mintlaw and District Men's Shed is delighted to announce the grand opening next month of a picture framing social enterprise at their Shed which will complement the skills of the Shed members.

Shed Chairman Gordon Reid said: "Our Shed was in the fortunate position to accept an offer made by the owner of the Framers Workshop, currently based in the village of Maud.

"The current owner Stanley wishes to semi-retire but to also see the business he has built and established over many years continue trading. The ill health of his wife also means that he wishes to reduce the time he spends in the business, but has agreed to undertake the training of the Men's Shed members whilst working these reduced hours.

"As a result of the move, the social enterprise has now rebranded as the Aden Picture Framing workshop and will proudly operate from the Mintlaw & District Men's Shed.

"Our opening ceremony will be carried out by Amanda Roe, Buchan Area Manager of Aberdeenshire Council, and deals will be available to the first 20 orders placed on that day. This event marks a new chapter for Aden Picture Framing and our Shed. Guests will have the opportunity to view a selection of bespoke framing work, learn more about our services and enjoy a relaxed afternoon among fellow members of the community.

"We see this new social enterprise sitting very nicely alongside our members' skills and there are a number of very capable guys who can adapt and use their current experience working with wood and glass. The expertise of being able to match the type of frame and mount for each picture is what we will be asking Stanley to upskill and fine tune our guy's capabilities to deliver the standard of picture framing that he has offered for many years.

"There is still time to plan your weekend of the 24th May so please come along to visit the Shed and the Aden Picture Framing workshop, as well as join us in some refreshments and hear all about our Shed's community work and the intergenerational mentoring project with Mintlaw Academy pupils.

So why wait! If you have been meaning to get that picture or rare portrait hanging around your garage, loft or spare room framed, bring it along on **Saturday 24th May 2025 from 1-3pm to Mintlaw and District Men's Shed, Gardeners Cottage, Aden Country Park, Mintlaw, Peterhead AB42 5FQ** and let the Aden Picture Framing workshop give you a great deal (to your specification) at a great price—especially if you are among the first 20 customers who qualify for our special offer. We look forward to welcoming you to our grand opening however, should you be unable to be with us, check us out on our socials—[Mintlaw and District Men's Shed](#) or [AdenPictureFraming](#) or visit the Shed website at www.mintlawdistrictmensshed.org."

Handy IT tips from one Shedder to another...

Stonehaven and District Men's Shed Trustee Barry Yorwerth has been compiling a resource of weekly help/hint sheets that cover a range of topics related to computers (Windows and Apple), as well as mobile devices (Apple and Android) for their Sheddors and contacted the SMSA to share even wider to SMSA members.

Barry said: "These helpsheets have been a great success within our Shed. I developed the idea after discovering that trying to organise classes failed for a few reasons—

some members felt embarrassed about learning IT in group peer settings leading them not to participate, or they were not confident enough to discuss issues with their PC/mobile in public. By sending out these weekly emails, our members are becoming better informed and encouraged to approach me individually for help and advice. This approach has proven to be very effective and successful.

"I have many more helpsheets where these came from and plan to compile these into a eBook for our membership. By sharing through The Scottish Shedder magazine and the SMSA, I hope these will benefit other Shed members and prevent duplication of effort trying to compile their own."

Tips for Sheddors >> Wee handy tips for Sheddors including staying safe with strong passwords and connecting with loved ones online through video calling.	Phone scams >> Phone scams targeting older people in Scotland are unfortunately quite common. Here are some of the most prevalent types of scams and how they work. This helpful resource covers many topics inc. Vishing (voice phishing) and pension and investment, PPI, Tax and impersonation scams.
Shortcuts for Outlook for Apple-Mac >> Helpful shortcuts and tips to help you navigate Outlook more efficiently.	Outlook shortcuts for Android and Apple iOS >> Helpful shortcuts and tips to help you navigate Outlook on your Android or iOS device more efficiently.



Retired chef and Kirkmuirhill and Blackwood Men's Shed (KBMS) Member John McFall (75) shares his story of feeling 'forgotten' following his daughter's death and subsequent marriage breakdown, turning to alcohol and being on the verge of taking his own life before joining, and feeling saved by, his local Men's Shed.

John said: "KBMS has been a lifesaver for me. I know that sounds quite dramatic but it literally has been. I came close to taking my own life a couple of times—I was on the verge and could not see a way out.

"Life has not been easy. My first marriage broke down and I brought up my two young children alone. Over time, I remarried—happily for many years, before tragically losing my daughter to suicide when she was just 27 years old. I didn't realise at the time how much of an affect that had on me or on the marriage.

"I ended up on my own in a sheltered housing complex—a one bedroom flat and weekends in particular were horrendously lonely. It felt like a prison sentence. I was on my own; with little or no contact with anyone else from day to day.

"I started drinking, basically because it was a kind of comfort for me at the time and helped me sleep, something I was really struggling with. I started using alcohol as a way of getting to sleep rather than seeking help. I was in a very dark place.

"I felt forgotten so began looking for 'something'. I started doing some local volunteering including cleaning up hospital gardens but unfortunately that role ended too. And then, four years ago, I heard about the Shed and what they'd done and thought 'I have to look into that'. So I did. I got the information that I needed and drove up to Kirkmuirhill and filled out my membership form there and then—one of the best things I've ever done.

"It really could not have come at a better time for me. I found that a lot of the guys were very open about some of the problems that they were having, health wise and in



their personal lives, and some had similar experiences to me. There were a few particular members that I ended up getting close to.

"When you finally get a chance to talk to somebody—someone you can really relate to—you could just talk to them all day, get a lot off your chest and you know that what you share is not going to be laughed at or passed on to anyone else—it's a safe space.

"For people out there reading this, that suffer from loneliness, are isolated in their own homes and/or grieving—get yourself along to the Shed because it has been my lifeline and it could be yours too!"

"Knowing that I had a fair bit to travel to and from the Shed—because I'm quite isolated in the village where I live—also took me away from the alcohol. The last thing I needed was to lose my driving license and feel even more social isolation.

"I now go to the Shed on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays most weeks. The Shed never used to open on a Friday but after I requested it, they began opening for that additional day to meet my needs. The Shed and my fellow Sheddors are a great help to me because it gives me a purpose and somewhere else to go rather than sitting in a sheltered housing complex.

"That was the godsend for me and that's what really perked me up because I found that I could open up and get things off my chest.

"But it wasn't just the social side that I loved. As a retired chef—I had never worked with wood in my life but the very first project I did, I was amazed at how much I thoroughly enjoyed working with wood and the tools and machinery. I got into it in a big way and have learned so much.

"I've been involved in so many Shed projects now including hand carvings and making clocks to sell at local fairs and community events. It is a pleasure to do my bit to raise funds to help keep this Shed functioning for all of the members including myself.

"All I can say is, for people out there reading this, that suffer from loneliness, are isolated in their own homes and/or grieving—get yourself along to the Shed because it has been my lifeline and it could be yours too!"



The SMSA connects with [Dalkeith Men's Shed](#) Vice-Chairman Duncan Seymour (56), a working Shedder who recently embarked on an eye-opening trip to Japan's first pilot Men's Shed—Pokke Kotan in Sapporo.

Duncan, a Maintenance Technician at an Early Learning Centre in Vogrie, said: "I heard about the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement through word of mouth and joined just over a year ago. Although I am busy in my working life, I wanted to put in the time to further connect with my community as a type of preparation for my retirement, plus improve on my D.I.Y and woodworking skills. I don't work on Fridays and the Shed is open from 10am to 1pm that day, so I go along every week to hang out and chat.

"Our Shed, within the [One Dalkeith](#) community hub, is currently rented hourly. With only having three hours at the Shed each week, and by the time we have finished catching up with each other, there is not much time left to get in the workshop. But when I do—I love making sticks, spoons, keyrings, wooden jewellery and much more. We have talked about introducing additional opening hours in the evenings and weekends for working members like me, and hopefully we can implement those in the near future and attract new members.

"Through my personal life, career, love of playing rugby and being a member of the Midlothian Walking Rugby Club, I have been fortunate to have travelled the world but, always on a shoe string budget and let's just say—it has made my journeys a little different to the norm!

"My wife Linda and I were planning another wee break and started looking at East Asia. I looked to see if there were any walking rugby and Men's Sheds in Japan but could not find anything. A little perseverance and more research and I learned about the Pokke Kotan Men's Shed—one of only two Sheds in Japan. The other Shed, 'Yo-Ro-Ya' meaning 'let's get together', is in the south in the village of Mizukami in Kyushu.

"I reached out to Pokke Kotan and began to correspond with Prof. Chihiro Sugimoto from Hokkaido University. Thankfully Chihiro's English is very good and we began chatting back and forth about my plans to visit them whilst on holiday.

"Armed with handmade gifts from my fellow Dalkeith Sheddies and a wee SMSA gift pack for our Sapporon

brothers (including SMSA lapel pin badges and pens), my wife and I flew the 6,000 miles to Osaka on the 20th February before touring around heading north to Hokkaido. We reached Sapporo on Friday 7th March—a day before our planned Shed visit.

"The pilot Men's Shed, supported by the [Japan Community Sheds Association](#) (JCSA) began back in October 2022 and aims to create a supportive community for its local men. Their men suffer from the same issues and problems as our Scottish men do. It is a collaboration project involving various individuals and organisations including Prof Barry Golding, Dr. Ayahito Ito (University of Tohoku) and Dr. Risa Takashima (Hokkaido University) with the goal to provide a space for local men to connect, share experiences, and engage in activities.

"On the day of our visit, Chihiro picked up my wife and I from our hotel and we navigated the snowy roads for the 45-minute drive to reach the Men's Shed. Pokke Kotan means 'warm village' and we certainly received a warm and friendly welcome on our arrival.

Continued on next page...





...continued from previous page

"We were shown around the Shed, called 'Base 871', a former derelict house that was donated by a construction company, and it was great to see their workshop and social areas that have been transformed by their 50-strong membership. I then delivered a presentation on the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement and what happens at our Shed before asking some questions from SMSA CEO Jason Schroeder.

"We also heard about the Japanese Men's Shed model and it was extremely interesting to hear about their unique 'Brain Dock' programme where the Shedders receive annual MRI scans for brain health monitoring, prostate cancer and even male pattern baldness!

"It is fantastic to see their government taking men's health and social isolation and loneliness so seriously. Japan has a high number of MRI scanners per capita and the Japanese government programme offers preventative health screening to identify any potential issues before they manifest as clinical symptoms. Their government is also actively investing in new MRI techniques including the use of AI in diagnostic imaging.

"It was then time to hand over the gifts from our Dalkeith members including Ronnie's handmade plaque (pictured right) and the SMSA gift pack. They were intrigued by the 'No Pub, No Bookies' poster and I had to explain what the pub and bookies are.

"We were certainly not expecting anything in return but were delighted to be presented with one member's beautiful origami butterflies. Following the exchange of gifts, we were then invited to go snowshoeing—which my wife and I were both more than up for trying.

"My wife Linda is a bit of a foodie and had asked if we could do a cookery class during our visit and show them how to make a traditional Scotch Broth which they kindly helped with—they even pre-soaked the pulses overnight for us. Our Japanese brothers then reciprocated by demonstrating and making hand-rolled sushi. We all then sat down to enjoy the multi-cuisine feast together.

"The visit to Pokke Kotan really opened my eyes. The welcome and hospitality was excellent and it was great to share a snippet of the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement to them.

"We are already discussing the potential for Chihiro and a few of the Pokke Kotan Shedders to come over and visit us, some of our local Sheds and the SMSA. This is an experience I will never forget."

Risa Takashima, Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Hokkaido University, said: "It is inspiring to hear about Duncan's conversations with the SMSA. We're still at the early stages of our Men's Shed journey in Japan, so it's encouraging to know that there is interest and support from a community with such a rich history and experience.

"We are truly honoured that Duncan wishes to share his experiences. It's a wonderful opportunity for us to learn from his insights and to introduce the Men's Shed concept to a broader audience in Japan. We are humbled by the interest from the Japanese Consulate in Edinburgh and this is a fantastic opportunity to foster connections and raise awareness in both of our countries."



PERSONAL STORIES

Renfrew Men's Shed recently filmed *'The Shed: A Short Film'*, through the City of Glasgow Student Production, which explores life at the Men's Shed and delves into one member's journey through grief.

The short film, directed by Louis Dalziel and produced by Matthew David, features Shed Founder John Carty, Dr Dani Hutcheon from Glasgow Caledonian University talking about the [Men's Shed Toolkit](#), SMSA Development Officer Stewart Beck and several Renfrew Sheddors and focuses in on member, Bryan Watson who recently lost his wife, Helen.

Shed Founder John Carty said: "I was keen to set up a Men's Shed when I retired after almost 40 years of teaching. I wanted to put my skills to good use elsewhere. I was aware of the Scottish Men's Shed model and the toolkit produced by Glasgow Caledonian University and set up a public meeting and one of the six men who attended the meeting, and has lasted the course, was Bryan Watson.

Bryan (pictured right), who on leaving school got an apprenticeship with British Steel and worked in the oil and gas industry for 40 years before retiring, said: "I was fortunate to be able to take voluntary redundancy, although unplanned, my wife was ill and I had to, and wanted to, get home to care for her.

"Being right into her social media, my wife Helen had read all about an upcoming meeting to discuss the potential for a Men's Shed in Renfrew through John Carty's Facebook page. We already knew John through watching the football at our local pub—albeit supporting different sides and John was often on the same side of the pub as Helen but it was all a good bit of fun."

John said: "Bryan brings so much to the table in terms of his experience and skills, and never held back about telling the others about his wife's serious health issues. He came to the Shed to take his mind off of it."

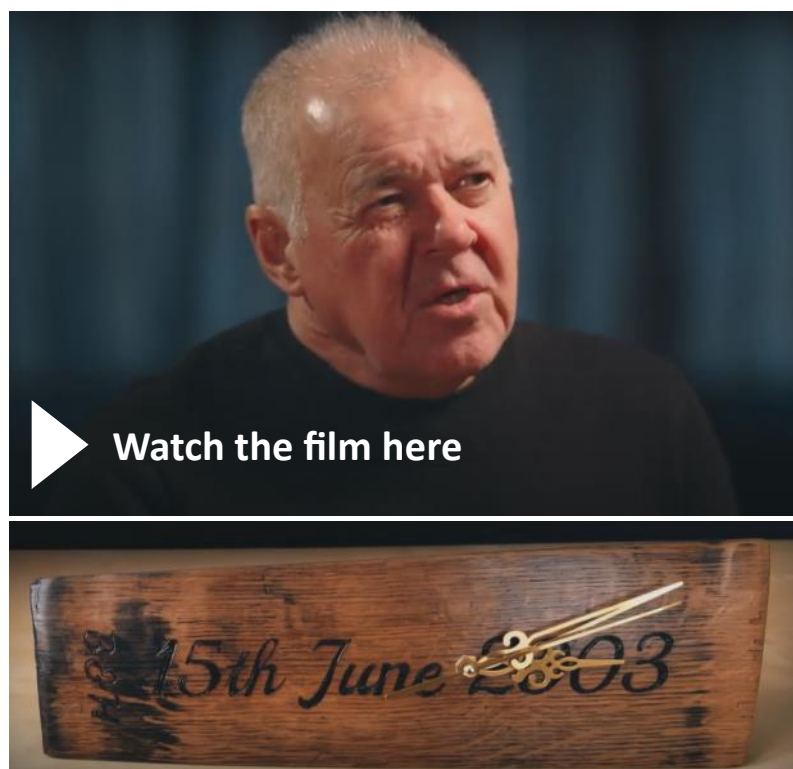
Bryan struggled with his mental health and anxiety and in 2015/2016 sought professional support. "I was reluctant in the beginning to seek help but so glad I did," he said. "I learned about coping techniques and my resilience got better and prepared me for what was going to happen."

"I now feel stronger and it is only because of places like the Men's Shed that helped me 'not drown' with everything life was throwing at me."

Just after the pandemic, Helen was diagnosed with lung cancer and given only seven months to live – which she beat. And, then the next year, the couple was hit with the news that the cancer had spread to her brain. "The strain she had to endure was horrendous. But, she had immense courage and strength right up until the end" Bryan said.

"The last year was particularly bad. On top of the cancer in her lungs and brain, Helen developed sepsis and was given four days to live. Helen was 64, and sepsis can be life threatening to many younger adults, but she also survived through that."

"I was going into the Shed workshop and making stuff for other people and then one day decided I was going to go in and make a clock for me and Helen. I created the wooden clock and then had our first name initials, B&H and the 15th June 2000 (the day we met) pyrographed on it by one of John's pals.



"We had the clock in the house and then when Helen was taken into hospital, I moved it there and then moved it again to the hospice. The clock was there all the way through. She was chuffed with that clock, it made her so happy. When she passed away, I took the battery out and it has been that way ever since – stopped at 11.55pm on the 7th August, marking a beginning and an end.

"My wife was a wonderful human being who was loved and adored and made such a positive impact on everyone she knew and met – I was just lucky enough to call her my wife. She's always been a great inspiration for me and encouraged me to go to the Shed which is only a short distance from our home. I didn't necessarily go into the Shed to talk about my problems, I wanted to get away from them. Helen was delighted that I could get out and have somewhere to go that I loved and enjoyed. It gave me respite.

"The Shed has helped me deal with my grief and remember that I need to concentrate on what we had, not what I lost. If we don't look after ourselves, we will be in no fit state to look after anyone else."

John Carty added: "The Shed was and is a release for Bryan. It offers a place to forget about all the crap going on in life. Members can choose to chat to others or come in, get their head down and let a project take their mind away. Get busy and feel better for it.

"At the end of the day – you can also make something, accomplish something and feel better about your self. I'm so happy that the Shed is here to help Bryan and others. We are not professional counsellors – a local Men's Shed just offers somewhere to meet up with people, that is more than enough.

"We are all so proud of Bryan for sharing his story for this film and showing how the Men's Shed helped him during such a difficult time in his life. It took a lot for Bryan to speak out for this production, but he wanted to raise awareness for others to look after themselves. Go along and check out your local Men's Shed to make you stronger to take on what life throws at us."

Barrhead Shedders restore a little piece of history for local funeral home

A 19th century undertakers bier, used before motor vehicles to transport coffins to home, burial or cremation, has been skilfully restored by Barrhead Men's Shed for their local funeral director.

Alex Storrie, Joint founding member of Barrhead Men's Shed, said: "Our relationship with our local funeral home began when the local funeral director, Robert Paton, came to our Shed to ask if we could make grave markers for him.

"We created a sample for him, which he was delighted with, and then asked us to make 25 of them. When the grave markers were completed and collected, Mr Paton mentioned that he had a very interesting project for us, if we were interested—refurbishing a 180-year-old funeral bier that he had obtained and was now in his garage.

"Always up for a challenge, myself and our workshop duty supervisor, Toni Capriotti, went along to view the bier and assess whether or not the restoration project was within Barrhead Shedders' range of skills.

"When we arrived at the garage, there it was—an old, sad-looking affair with four buckled and rusty wheels, missing and damaged spokes, cracked tyres and faded paintwork. However, after we scratched our heads a bit, we felt we could take this on and could see huge potential to refresh this historic artefact.

"The funeral director asked us for an estimate for the work to which we suggested a donation towards the costs. Robert then went on to give an extremely generous donation to carry out whatever work was required to restore it to its former beauty.

"A few days later, the bier was delivered to our Shed workshop and work began to dismantle the bier and assess all the component parts for repair or replacement.

"A third member was recruited to the refurb team (pictured below)—Alastair McNiven, another one of our workshop duty supervisors. Toni was allocated sorting out the four wheels, making new spokes where required, repairing and reassembling all the solid rubber tyres onto



the cleaned and unbuckled wheel rims and the suspension springs and steering mechanism.

"I took on the task of cleaning all the rust and dirt from all the metal parts, cleaning and removing all the old paintwork then repainting all the metal parts with three coats of black Hammerite paint. Alistair took on the work of restoring all the woodwork of the bier, which considering the age of the vehicle was in surprisingly good condition below all the dirt and grime.

"With all the component parts cleaned de-rusted repaired or replaced by making new parts the job of reassembling the bier was commenced.

"When reassembling was almost complete, Robert appeared at the Shed unannounced and stood behind me. When I turned around to see who was standing behind me, Robert's face had a look of complete astonishment at the transformation of the bier and was absolutely delighted.

"Robert could not have praised our work more. He was so pleased with the final result that he made another very generous donation to keep our Shed going with tea, coffee and biscuits for a very long time.

"Although the refurbishment took several weeks of intense work, it really was the most satisfying of jobs taken on by our refurb team. We enjoyed it immensely."

Robert Paton from D Moodie & Co. Funeral Directors said: "We are proud to be able to display, in our funeral home, a little piece of history that was expertly renovated by the Barrhead Men's Shed team.

"The bier is now on show in our front window on Main Street, Barrhead in full view to our community along with a before and after picture on one side and a picture of the three shedders who carried out the work on the other side. We are delighted that Barrhead Men's Shed assisted us with this very important project."





Fraserburgh Community Men's Shed's latest project is right on track

Fraserburgh Community Men's Shed's model railway project has been a fantastic opportunity for its members to steam ahead learning and sharing skills whilst unleashing their inner engineer and creative sides! Whether a beginner or seasoned modeller, the project has involved just about every regular member in one way or another—and together they have created a stunning model railway that they are extremely proud of.

Ralph Grantham from Fraserburgh Community Men's Shed said: "We never thought there would be so much interest in model railways when the idea was spoken about at a members' meeting one day.

"What surprised us the most was the amount of folk that attended the first meeting! Grand layouts were discussed, ambitious ideas for multiple engines running at the same time, multi-levels and interchangeable options were put forward – blue sky thinking and brainstorming at its best!

"However, common sense prevailed especially when we collected a model railway layout that was no longer needed. It had no buildings, no trains or rolling stock, just the table and track. It didn't look much but with a lot of hard work and plenty of imagination our model railway slowly came to life.

"For anyone thinking of starting a layout, the most important thing to consider, is the track. You'll learn radiuses or is that radii, convex curves, angles – everything

you learned at school and never thought you'd need again! Whilst the track layers were doing their thing who thought ballast would be so contentious (we learned from experience to not use cat litter)?

"The modellers cracked on populating the board with a church with a wedding in progress, a cricket pitch in the middle of a match, allotments with allotmenters, a village square with a Christmas tree (recently replaced by a maypole for spring), a fairground with a speedway and shooting range with revellers and everything in between.

"At Christmas, Santa could be seen stuck down a chimney and the sleigh and reindeer going around the track being pulled by Thomas the Tank Engine!

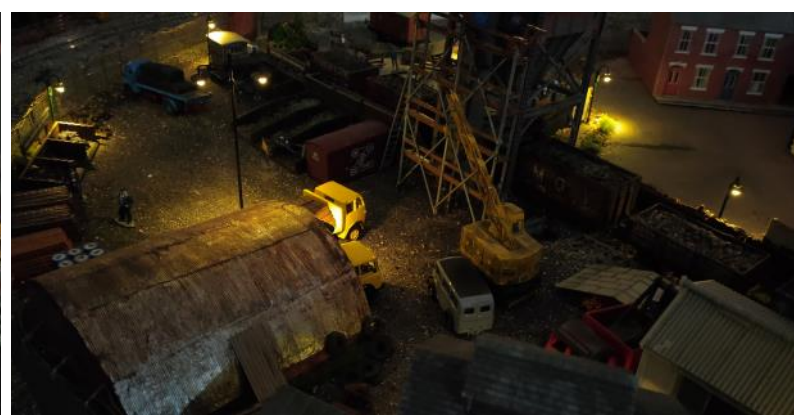
"It's been a collaboration of many talents within our membership!"

"We are fortunate to have someone who knows their way around an electrical circuit or two and he's wired the lighting to the buildings, the effect of a welder's arcs, the roundabouts in the fairground along with accompanying sound effects.

"All in all, up to now, it's been a collaboration of many talents within our membership and, the best thing is that a year and a half on – it isn't finished and probably never will be.

"Things will change as time goes on, the fairground could be replaced with a circus or something else that our creative minds come up with!

"So, if you're thinking what could we possibly need a model railway for – well, it's very popular—a crowd pleaser, a point of interest, a rewarding hobby, but most of all it brings a lot of people together to create something to be proud of."





Fochabers Men's Shed has been in existence since 2014 and its tenth year has been full to the brim with a wide variety of community and members' projects. From creating a very scary cave entrance for a local Aladdin panto show to spinning wheels, repairing model Drifter boats and Carousel Wheel models and everything in between.

Fochabers Men's Shed Treasurer Rob Goodall said: "It is certainly never a dull day at our Shed with the abundance of bespoke requests we receive.

"Just over the last wee while, our Shed's community projects have included the refurbishment of the boundary fencing at local Memorial Gardens—very rotten old poles replaced by very heavy new ones—as well as making and installing a memorial bench and refurbishing a second one.

"We also built a very heavy sandpit for our local nursery; tidied up our local crazy golf facilities; built some storage modules for the Fochabers Food Stop—a one-stop shop and community food hub for anyone who needs a little help; rewired and installed new LEDs on the Christmas Lights for the school and Heritage Centre; installed a wall-mounted screen at the Fochabers Institute; and built a base for the Duck Race Trophy, a keenly contested annual event at the Fochabers Gala.

"As well as this we also carried out some projects for local residents including constructing a spinning wheel (our fourth to date); repairing a Carousel Wheel model; repairing a model Drifter boat—not back to original condition, but safe and secure for another lifetime.

"Our biggest project last year came along when we were asked if we could help

with the scenery and backdrops for the annual panto, staged by Elgin Amateur Dramatic Society (EADS). Their usual constructor was unable to do it and they approached us to see if we could. After a meeting or two to get to know the scale of the job, our members were asked if they could commit the time, did we have the expertise etc.

"The answer was... of course we could! We started the head-scratching to turn our thoughts and ideas into actual structures. Thankfully, we could use EADS' storage workshop as that saved a lot of time and effort for us oldies. The results were outstanding, and the 'washing machine' 'tumble drier' and 'cave entrance' all stood up to the test. Oh yes it did!

"EADS offered our members tickets for the performance and those who took them up were delighted as all the performers put on a great production over four shows. We hope to be asked again next time.

"Keeping up with our own personal projects, hobbies and interests is also something very important at our Shed. For instance, one of our members Alf creates beautiful Intarsia works of art. This after all, is what the Men's Shed model is all about. We have such a wide variety of talents at our Shed that we are all immensely proud of."

Pictured (clockwise): part of the scenery created for Elgin amateur dramatic society for their panto Aladdin; the Fochabers Food Stop store cupboard; the memorial gardens' boundary fencing; tidying up the local crazy golf facilities; a refurbished memorial bench; Intarsia work of art from member Alf; and the restored Drifter.





Inch, Leslie and District Men's Shed completes first commission

Inch, Leslie and District Men's Shed, recently completed its first commission for its local nursery.

A delighted Inch Nursery recently received a new and improved mud kitchen which was designed, built and installed by the Inch, Leslie and District Sheddars to match the nursery's exact requirements.

Some comments from the staff and children were 'wow', 'can I play with it now', 'so much better than we could ever have expected', 'better than anything we could have bought online' and 'where does that pipe go'.

Dougie Simmers from the Shed said: "We're sure the children will have many years of fun with this new mud kitchen and we are thrilled with our first project.

Pictured above (left to right): Some ; the nursery's previous mud kitchen; materials we had to work with; almost completed; and some of the children enjoying the completed mud kitchen.

"All materials were recycled—from old doors, off saw cut and warped wood, old staging, sink and even the plastic worktop was made from recycled plastic. All part of our ethos of reusing and recycling as much as possible. The only new materials were glue, silicone, screws and varnish.

"Our Shed began in mid 2024 and our membership is growing monthly—we already have 40+ members. We meet fortnightly at the Old School in Leslie in Aberdeenshire, at the site we hope to acquire from Aberdeenshire Council via Community Asset Transfer.

"Our meetings regularly have more than 15 members in attendance and while we are not fully in the building yet, we are delighted to be able to start helping our community with projects like this."



Sheds improve hospital grounds to benefit patients, visitors and staff

Aberchirder & District Men Shed's latest partnership project involved creating new planters for the ***Friends of Chalmers Hospital*** in Banff to improve the hospital's environment and benefit all who use the facility.

The planters were delivered by Sheddars Alan and Jim and presented to Janet Hafton. Caroline from Eden Plants in Banff will supply the plants to fill the planters.

This is not the first time that a Shed has helped the Friends of Chalmers Hospital charity. ***Banff and Macduff***

Men's Shed and Banff and Macduff In Bloom also created new planters for the hospital grounds in October 2024 with beautiful plants as a welcome additional for patients, visitors and staff alike.

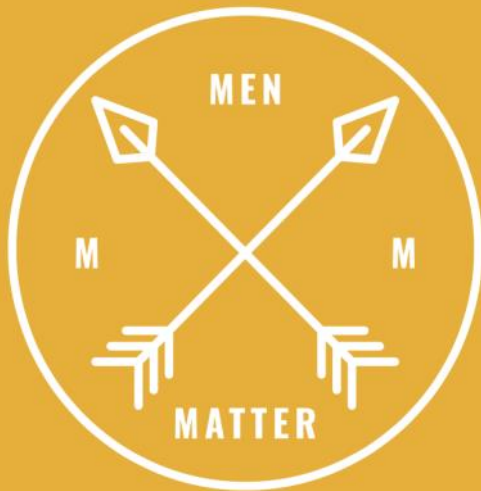
There is a growing body of evidence which highlights the importance of healing environments at hospitals. The benefits of visiting or viewing nature and green environments can play an important role in the concept of healing and reducing stress.

Pictured (left to right): Caroline from Eden Plants, Janet Hafton (Friends of Chalmers Hospital) and Aberchirder Shedder Jim Paterson delivering the planters to the hospital; and Banff Shed's new planters for the hospital.

Over the past decade, the SMSA has built up many relationships and partnerships that align with our charity's vision and aids our outcomes for a healthier Scottish male population. Recently our CEO Jason Schroeder travelled to visit the Men Matter Scotland charity and see if there was another bridge to be made in strengthening the support between each other with regards to Scotland's male outreach work.

Jason spent a few hours with Fraser Devine, the manager and one of the founders, and received a tour of their 'HUB' in Drumchapel—a diverse, holistic and encompassing set up. THE HUB was created from real experience of Fraser being on the street himself. Jason said: "The HUB works. You can feel the passion and the teamwork from all of their volunteers and the commitment to help men who go there to change their lives for the better. We are looking forward to where this new partnership takes us."

Here, Men Matter Scotland shares their story...



In the latest National Records of Scotland (NRS) statistics, 792 people died by suicide in 2023—an increase of 30 on the previous year—and, 590 were men. Male suicides increased by 34 to 590 whilst female probable suicide deaths decreased.

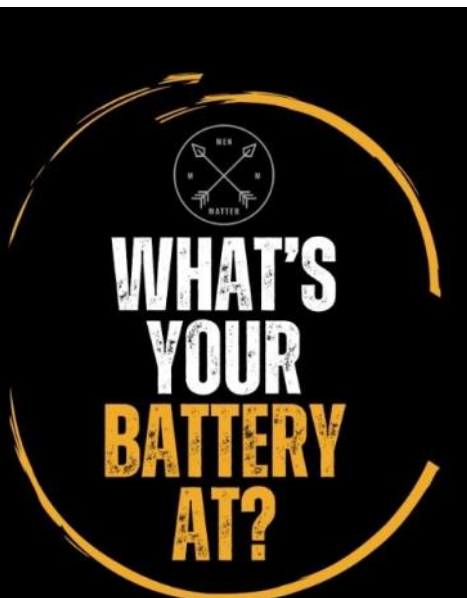
Men Matter Scotland's aim is to improve men's mental health and wellbeing through peer-to-peer support to help prevent suicide. The charity began in 2019 as a Dad's Matter group, for fathers to get together with their kids and chat. By 2020, it was not just dads who were attending and the charity underwent a re-brand to Men Matter Scotland.

In their HUB in Drumchapel, they have had over 4,000 men come through the doors to use their services. 'What's your battery at?' is the motto prominently painted above the front desk as you enter the HUB building. Why? Well, the charity's team firmly believes that this phrase helps cut through the 'how are you?' chat that men tend to greet each other with. This is how you are feeling out of 100% every time you enter the hub or when we talk to each other. This quickly gives us an idea of how your mental health is and if any guy needs a chat.

Martin Melly from Men Matter Scotland said: "In the HUB, we have many different classes for men as we know that not everyone will have the same interests or warm to everything that we offer. Understanding that men need purpose, self-care and connection with other likeminded people is important for the atmosphere we provide here.

"We put on wellness classes including sound bath sessions, meditation, breathwork, yoga and tai chi. Also on offer are mindset classes—moving forward, mindset coaching, Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) and much more. We offer a seven-day service which includes fishing on Saturdays and Go Wilds on a Sunday. It is a safe environment and fully confidential for any man wanting to join.... and we don't ask for a penny for any of this. We also offer additional support such as Shared Parenting Scotland, massage, DWP advice, Narcotics Anonymous, Alcoholics Anonymous and Violence Anonymous. We pride ourselves on being able to supply so much for so many men, this is why we also provide counselling services for guys struggling and in need to talk to a qualified counsellor.

"For so many, our service has been a lifeline, but we know so many more can benefit from using our service. More and more men are struggling with their mental health across Scotland and we see Scottish suicide rates spike. If you or anyone you know is struggling, then please get in touch with us either through our social media platforms ([Facebook](#), [X](#) or [Instagram](#)) or call 0141 944 7900 or through the referral system on our [website](#)."



OPPORTUNITIES



CASTLE DOUGLAS SOAPBOX DERBY

SUNDAY 13TH JULY 2025

KING STREET, CASTLE DOUGLAS

FIRST RACE STARTS 1PM

FREE PUBLIC ENTRY | LOCAL CRAFT STALLS

FOOD AND REFRESHMENTS

REGISTER YOUR TEAM NOW @
CASTLEDOUGLASSOAPBOXDERBY@HOTMAIL.COM




MEETING LONELINESS TOGETHER

9-15 June 2025

LONELINESS AWARENESS WEEK

Share your support on socials using the hashtag:

#LonelinessAwarenessWeek

Has your Shed got what it takes?

Free Registration for Scottish Men's Sheds for the 2025 Soap Box Derby

The next **Castle Douglas Soap Box Derby** date has already been announced as the **13th July 2025** and the SMSA has been offered **FREE REGISTRATION** to Scottish Men's Shed teams for 2025 (usually £50)! Check out **Glenkens Men's Shed** and **Kirkmuirhill and Blackwood Men's Shed's** updates on the 2024 derby that they competed in, in the **October 2024 edition** of The Scottish Shedder magazine (page 26).

Set your Shed members the challenge and SIGN UP FOR FREE today at
<https://cdsoapboxderby.co.uk>

Silent Men Film: The Awkward Art of Expressing Emotion

Exploring aspects of masculinity that all too often are little discussed, this film opens the door for other ways of being, communicating and healing, as well as attempting to define masculinity.

[Silent Men will be screening at the Hippodrome Cinema in Falkirk on Sunday 11th May 2025 at 7.30pm.](#)

Feed community spirit with The Big Lunch!

Would you like to organise a get together this summer? With The Big Lunch on the 7th-8th June 2025 just around the corner, the event organiser Eden Project has been cooking up some fabulous new ideas, resources and events to help you plan a community celebration to look forward to.

Millions across the UK will come together to share friendship, food and fun for The Big Lunch. Your Community, Your Celebration! [Click here to find out more>>](#)

Hosted by the [Marmalade Trust](#), Loneliness Awareness Week takes place between the 9th and 15th June this year!

Loneliness is a normal human emotion that we all feel at some point in our lives and it's a myth that it only impacts older people – in fact 16–24-year-olds are now the most likely to feel lonely.

However, it can be hard for us to admit how we feel. By understanding loneliness and talking about it, we can reduce the stigma surrounding it.

Meeting Loneliness Together, this year's theme, is all about reducing stigma. With more than 3,000 events taking place across the UK during last year's Loneliness Awareness Week, this year let's make more people connect than ever. Together, let's raise awareness of loneliness by sparking conversations and creating more opportunities for people to connect.

Take part by signing up for the Loneliness Awareness Week [newsletter](#), downloading the [resources](#), and promoting your Shed's activity on the [Connection Map](#).



Head 'Tay' Dundee for the Prostate FFIT programme!

PROSTATE FFIT AT GARDYNE CAMPUS WITH DUNDEE FC KICKS OFF THURSDAY 29TH MAY 2025 AT 11AM

Following the amazing success of Prostate Football Fans In Training (PFFIT) throughout Scotland, Prostate Scotland is delighted to be bringing the programme to Dundee!

The Prostate FFIT programme will be hosted by **Dundee FC Community Trust** at the **Gardyne Campus** next month!

This unique exercise programme is based on the hugely successful training delivered by football clubs across Scotland in conjunction with the SPFL Trust. PFFIT has been running for over two years now with programmes at Aberdeen, Hearts, Kilmarnock, Rangers and St Johnstone. It's open to all men affected by prostate cancer and is a great opportunity to meet men in a similar situation, share experiences and improve fitness (whatever your level).

Spring into action and head 'Tay' Dundee!

Starting on **Thursday 29th May 2025 at 11am**, the **free** programme will run for **13 weeks** and each session will be split into two halves – learning and exercise – then there's exercise videos for homework! There are just **16 places available** and men can register online at <https://spfltrust.org.uk/prostateffit>

Not sure if it's for you?

Take a look at this [STV News clip](#) which speaks directly to the men who took part in the programme at Ibrox last year.





**SCOTTISH
MEN'S SHEDS
ASSOCIATION**

Help **WAVE THE FLAG** for the SMSA and Scottish Men's Sheds Movement

There are many ways to support 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

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 vision for the people of Scotland. The charity'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.

SCOTTISH MEN'S SHEDS ASSOCIATION
BANCHORY BUSINESS CENTRE
BURN O'BENNIE ROAD, BANCHORY
ABERDEENSHIRE, AB31 5ZU

info@scottishmsa.org.uk
www.scottishmsa.org.uk

In Scotland, For Scotland

