

# THE SCOTTISH SHEDDER

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE SMSA



**SCOTTISH  
MEN'S SHEDS  
ASSOCIATION**

**SCOTLAND'S LARGEST  
MEN'S HEALTH & WELLBEING CHARITY**

*In Scotland, For Scotland*

## SCOTTISH MEN'S SHED OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2025

CELEBRATING OUR FIVE  
REGIONAL WINNERS



**St Andrews**



**Inverness**



**Clyde Coast & Cumbraes**



**Houston & Killellan**



**Dalkeith**

Edition 45 | August 2025



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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.

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Well, what a surprise I got when Robert Gordon University (RGU) got in touch to honour my Men's Shed work over the past 15 years. It was another real gift to share the experience by the attendance of my son.

My hope is that this level of academic honouring will help create a positive impact for the SMSA and the movement amongst our valued investors who continue to financially support us and for those who have been on the fence about getting on board with men's health through this successful engagement health model.

***"I want to offer my warmest congratulations on receiving your Honorary Doctor of Business Administration from Aberdeen Business School at RGU. Your work in founding and leading the SMSA has been nothing short of transformative."***

***"What began as a local initiative has grown into a national movement that has touched countless lives across Scotland. By creating spaces that are 'for the men, by the men', you've helped foster vital community bonds, promoted social inclusion, and supported the health and wellbeing of so many individuals."***

***"At RGU, we hold community, wellbeing, and innovation at our core. Your leadership of the Men's Shed movement is a remarkable example of those values in action, and we are incredibly proud to recognise your achievements through this honorary degree."***

***"It was a true pleasure to share the graduation stage with you. Your story is an inspiration, and I know it will resonate deeply with our students and graduates as they look to make a difference in their own ways."***

***"Thank you once again for the positive change you've made and continue to make in communities across Scotland."***

**Professor Steve Olivier  
Principal and Vice-Chancellor**

You can [watch the award ceremony and my acceptance speech](#) here.

I was pleased to be invited to contribute to national policy on men's mental health by providing peer review input for an upcoming research briefing on men's mental health. The request came from a researcher within the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe), the Parliament's research department which provides impartial and evidence-based information for parliamentary committees and MSPs.

Having previously contributed evidence on this important issue, I was invited to offer feedback from a grassroots, community-based perspective, ensuring the voices of older men and the wider Shed movement are reflected in parliamentary understanding.

We are proud to play a part in shaping informed, evidence-based policy that recognises the value of prevention, connection, and purpose in improving men's wellbeing across Scotland.

My hope is that this type of research will have an impact in Scottish Government circles, which like in other countries have grasped the Men's Sheds movement with both hands and start financially investing in it as a significant means of positively changing our quality of life which impacts across all levels of our society.

The WIGWAM-S research project by Glasgow Caledonian University, community initiatives to support health and wellbeing of men living in disadvantaged areas and of working age (16-65) is coming to its completion and we look forward to having Dr Dani Hutcheon as a guest speaker at the SMSA national gathering, AGM and Awards event on Friday 3rd October in Perth. This is a particular demographic that we are very keen to understand and how the Scottish Men's Sheds movement can help improve their lives.

I wanted to share that Professor Barry Golding AM (Honorary Professor in adult and community education of the Federation University Australia in Ballarat since June 2021 and Patron of the Australian Men's Shed Association) recently applied for a Churchill Fellowship to visit Men's Sheds in several countries, including Scotland, where the movement has been meaningfully adopted and adapted.

It was an extremely competitive process and he was unfortunately not successful in securing the Fellowship. Barry has expressed his sincere thanks to everyone involved, especially the SMSA, for the support in helping him develop a proposed 2026 program that would have included Scotland as a key component.

On a local level, we have been busy with the new Scottish Men's Shed of the Year format for 2025. Huge congratulations to the five regional winners. I am glad that I was not part of the very difficult judging process and want to acknowledge the effort by all the Sheds that applied this year.

I visited the three finalists where we decided to make short films, rather than the written word, this time for you—our members—to vote on. It was brilliant to spend the day with each Shed, experience why they were chosen and to try capture this on film.

Each Shed could easily have been a 30 minute film, however we have had to edit to 5-6 minutes max for you to vote on. A challenging task to say the least and we look forward to your feedback if we should continue with this format next year.

I'm really looking forward to catching up with many of you this October at the SMSA National Gathering and Networking Day, which will also host the Scottish Men's Shed of the Year Awards ceremony and our AGM. It promises to be another fantastic day of connection, conversation, and celebration of all things Men's Sheds in Scotland.

**Dr Jason Schroeder  
Chief Executive Officer  
Scottish Men's Sheds Association**



# SMSA SHED OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2025



## Voting for the SMSA's 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' Awards 2025 opens this Friday (29th August)!

The SMSA team has visited our three fantastic finalists for this year's Scottish Men's Shed of the Year Awards 2025—Clyde Coast and Cumbræes, Dalkeith, and St Andrews Men's Shed—to spend a day in their Sheds, filming Shed life and interviewing trustees and members. To keep things fair, we asked each of them the same questions in the same format.

This year, we're doing things differently. Instead of a public vote, it's down to you, our SMSA individual members—Shedders, partners, funders and supporters of the Scottish Men's Shed Movement—to choose your winner.

**Step 1—[Watch the Sheds' short films](#)** (available from this Friday). Get inspired, see what goes on behind the Shed doors, and hear directly from the Shedders themselves.

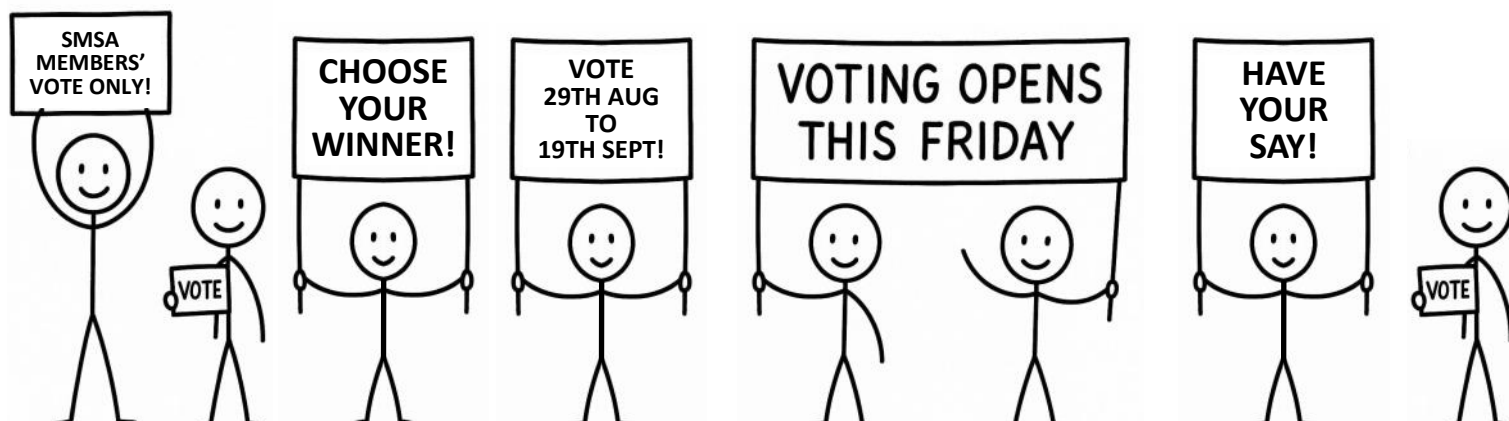
Take a wee peek inside the doors of our three fantastic finalists and discover what makes each Men's Shed so special. From the projects they've built to the friendships they've forged, these Sheds are shining examples of community, camaraderie and creativity in action.

**Step 2—You Decide:** [Cast your vote](#) for who you feel is your winner.

## Your voice matters!

Voting opens on Friday 29th August 2025—SMSA individual members will receive an email communication once voting goes live—and closes at midnight on Friday 19th September 2025.

The winner and two runners up will then be announced at the SMSA national gathering, AGM and Awards event on Friday 3rd October 2025 at Perth & Kinross Council Chambers and Civic Hall.



## 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



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

[Click here to notify the SMSA](#)







**Region 1 – East Coast (North) - St Andrews Men's Shed**

***The Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) crowned five outstanding Men's Sheds as regional champions in the 2025 Scottish Men's Shed of the Year Awards. This year introduced a new regional format to recognise and celebrate more Sheds across Scotland—and a record number of applications made the judging especially tough.***

## **Region 1 – East Coast (North): St Andrews Men's Shed**

St Andrews Men's Shed (SAMS) has earned top honours for its transformation of an empty site in Craigtoun Country Park into a vibrant, purpose-built hub of community activity. With a fully equipped workshop, social spaces, gardens, and an orchard, the site is now a shining example of what a Shed can become.

"We recently celebrated receiving the final sign-off from Fife Council," said SAMS Trustee Adrian Snowball. "It's the culmination of two years of hard work, friendship, and determination—and it's all been made possible thanks to our members, the overwhelming support of the wider community and the leadership of our former Chair, Henry Paul."

SAMS members took on much of the physical work themselves—from installing machinery and fitting the crew room to laying out gardens and a polytunnel. With an estimated 10,000+ volunteer hours. With backing from local businesses like Morrison Construction and Henderson Fabrication, the Shed is now secured for decades to come.

## **Region 2 – East Coast (South): Dalkeith Men's Shed**

Dalkeith Men's Shed has emerged as a powerhouse of local and international connection. Their Shed's impact has reached far beyond Midlothian thanks to a growing partnership with Pokke Kotan, Japan's first Men's Shed.

From building planters and benches for charities to repairing school furniture, Dalkeith members stay active and engaged in community projects. The visit from the



**Region 2 – East Coast (South): Dalkeith Men's Shed**

Japanese Consulate and support from the Daiwa Foundation have brought global recognition to this tight-knit group.

"Our cultural exchange has opened new doors," said Secretary John Bell. "It's given our members new energy and purpose—and inspired plans for a Scottish-Japanese Men's Shed Summit."

## **Region 3 – West Coast (North): Houston & Killellan Church Men's Shed**

In Renfrewshire, Houston & Killellan Men's Shed has become a bedrock of community support and wellbeing. Formed just months before the pandemic, the group bounced back to create a welcoming space for men of all faiths and none.

Members have supported their village through a wide range of projects—creating signage for the church, helping local schools, and even constructing an Anderson shelter for VE Day celebrations. Their partnership with St Vincent's Hospice also supports men facing serious health challenges.

"We're inclusive, hands-on, and focused on building connections," said Co-Secretary Jim McLaughlin. "This regional award means the world to us."

*Continued on next page...*

**Region 3 – West Coast (North): Houston & Killellan Men's Shed**





**Region 4 – West Coast (South):**  
**Clyde Coast & Cumbraes Men's Shed**



**Region 5 – Highlands & Islands:**  
**Inverness Men's Shed**

*...continued from previous page*

## Region 4 – West Coast (South): Clyde Coast & Cumbraes Men's Shed

Largs-based Clyde Coast & Cumbraes Men's Shed has had a landmark year—achieving full ownership of its building. But their real strength lies in their ability to foster friendships, creativity, and personal growth through a wide range of activities.

Members take part in everything from community builds and gardening to musical performances and group walks. Referrals from GPs and job centres reflect the Shed's increasing importance as a local wellbeing resource.

"We've grown into a trusted, welcoming hub," said Secretary Andy McNeill. "Owning our building is huge—but the impact we've made on people's lives is even bigger."

## Region 5 – Highlands & Islands: Inverness Men's Shed

Inverness Men's Shed stands as a beacon of purpose and perseverance in the Highlands. After securing a 99-year lease on an old sports pavilion in 2021, members transformed the space through extensive renovation—creating a busy, welcoming Shed open five days a week.

"We built it from the ground up," said Chair Murdo Maciver. "From rewiring and plumbing to access and parking—it's all been shaped by our members' hands."

With activities ranging from woodworking to IT support and creative writing, the Shed welcomes members in their 50s to their 90s. It also offers vital social interaction for those facing isolation, and supports local schools, the council, and even the National Trust for Scotland with community projects.

"Every Shed has a story," said Jason Schroeder. "These five are outstanding examples of the power of community, skill-sharing, and compassion that defines the Scottish Men's Sheds movement."

## What's Next?

Earlier this month, the SMSA Trustees judged the five regional winners, each taking on the tough task of ranking them in order.

The final three—**Clyde Coast and Cumbraes, Dalkeith, and St Andrews**—now progress to an SMSA individual members' vote, open from Friday 29th August until midnight on 19th September 2025, to determine the winner.

As part of the process, the SMSA visited each of the Sheds for a day to film in their Shed and interview their Trustees and members in action.

The **national winner** will be announced at the **SMSA AGM and Awards Ceremony on Friday 3rd October 2025 in Perth**.

- **All five regional winners:** receive £250 and their regional title.
- **Top three Sheds:** receive regional title, trophy, certificate and prizes.





**SCOTTISH  
MEN'S SHEDS  
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## Protecting a space for male health and wellbeing

*In recent years, there has been growing discussion around the idea of transforming Men's Sheds into "Community Sheds" open to all genders. While inclusivity is a valuable social aim, the SMSA feels it is vital to remember that Men's Sheds were created with a very specific and essential purpose: to support men's health and wellbeing, especially as they age, retire, and/or face social isolation, loneliness, and boredom. Diluting this focus risks undermining what makes the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement effective, unique and – most importantly – necessary.*

### Born out of necessity

Men's Sheds did not appear by accident; they were a response to a real and pressing need. For decades, men – particularly older men – have been less likely to seek help, open up about their feelings, or access traditional support services. The consequences have been stark: men face disproportionately high levels of loneliness, depression, poor physical health, and suicide.

The Shed model provides a subtle but powerful solution: a practical, non-clinical, male-friendly space where men can find purpose, friendship, and the opportunity to talk – or not talk – as they choose. Shared activities open the door to quiet conversation, camaraderie, and peer support through their community. And, this is not something easily replicated in a mixed environment.

### Why male-only matters

The phrase "men only" can sometimes be misread as exclusionary, but within the Shed movement it is about comfort and understanding. Many who walk through a Shed's doors have spent years in isolation or searching for purpose. They may be grieving, unwell, recently retired, or simply struggling in silence. For them, stepping into a familiar, male-only environment provides a sense of ease that encourages engagement.

The relaxed, honest atmosphere – one of the key strengths of a Men's Shed – becomes harder to sustain. Research shows that many men are far more likely to open up in male-only spaces, where cultural expectations and inhibitions are lowered, and trust can develop more naturally. If this element was removed, the dynamic shifts.

### Funding challenges

It is important to acknowledge that some funding streams come with conditions that can make life challenging for male-only Sheds. A number of funders place restrictions on supporting single-gender initiatives, even when there is strong evidence of need. In many

cases, applications are processed by automated online systems rather than a human being—which can sometimes result in instant rejection or being ineligible to apply—without any real understanding of the Shed model.

This overlooks not only the social value of Sheds but also their fiscal benefit – by improving men's health and wellbeing, Sheds help to reduce the growing pressures on our health and social care services, ultimately saving money for society. Faced with this, some Sheds may feel compelled to comply or dilute their male-only model in order to secure funding, even when it runs counter to the reason they were set up in the first place.

But doing so carries its own risks: by becoming a "Community Shed," Sheds may actually render themselves ineligible for specific funding streams aimed at men's health projects and initiatives.

The SMSA has also recently heard feedback from Sheddors who are concerned that it might even be 'illegal' to operate as a Men's Shed – a concern born from the confusing and inconsistent messages that come from some funding bodies.

The SMSA continues to make the case that protecting men's spaces is not about exclusion, but about fairness – ensuring men, too, have a safe and supportive environment designed specifically for them.

### Inclusion is not about one-size-fits-all

Inclusion does not always mean everyone in the same room at the same time. It can also mean recognising and respecting different needs within the broader community. Thousands of women have access to numerous thriving social and support groups—such as the Scottish Women's Institute—which play a vital role.

Why then, should a proven male-centred model be reshaped to fit a one-size-fits-all idea of inclusivity?

*"Men's Sheds were founded to provide men with a unique environment tailored specifically to their needs. While inclusivity is important, we must be cautious not to lose the essence of what makes these spaces so valuable to men's health and wellbeing."*

**David Gardner**  
SMSA Chairman

The SMSA believes the way forward is not to dilute Men's Sheds, but to encourage parallel models where appropriate – supporting women, families, and young people in their own dedicated spaces. Inclusion does not mean uniformity; it means respecting difference.

### Defending the core mission

At its heart, this 'debate' is about safeguarding the very reason Men's Sheds exist. Rebranding or reshaping Sheds to satisfy broad inclusivity agendas or tick funding boxes risks losing the very thing that makes them work.

This is not about turning people away. It is about preserving a rare and vital lifeline for men, created by the men, and for the men. Scottish Men's Sheds save lives. They change lives. And they must be protected as male-only spaces if they are to continue doing so effectively.

**The SMSA is not against inclusion – but, through new research, we know that for men to thrive in a healthy way they need, and deserve, a space to call their own.**

## Bridging Generations: Attracting young men to the Scottish Men's Shed Movement

*Over the past decade, Men's Sheds have been a lifeline for thousands of older men across Scotland. Over time, it has become clear that the benefits of the Shed movement shouldn't be limited to just older generations. By engaging younger men, Sheds can pass on valuable traditional skills, knowledge, and the values of connection and wellbeing to future generations, helping ensure that Sheds continue to exist and thrive for many years to come.*

### Why young men need the Shed

Increasingly, attention is turning to engaging younger men—those aged 18+—who also face isolation, stress, and a lack of purpose. In the UK, loneliness is particularly prevalent among 16–24-year-olds. A 2018 Office for National Statistics (ONS) survey revealed that almost 40% experienced loneliness "often or very often".

Unlike previous generations, many younger men are often more willing to challenge the "strong and silent" stereotype passed down from our fathers and grandfathers. They are, in many ways, more confident discussing emotions, less bound by outdated norms, and more open to seeking connection and support. Men's Sheds offer a unique opportunity to untangle these outdated perceptions and offer a new way of thinking for the future—showing that it's okay to talk, ask for help, and connect with others in our communities for learning, purpose, and camaraderie.

Many younger men in Scotland today face a range of pressures, including academic or work-related stress, digital overload, unemployment, the cost-of-living crisis, and a shortage of positive male role models, mentors, and elders.

With many youth centres and clubs now closed, many young men struggle to find the unique support once provided by youth workers—professionals who are neither parent nor teacher, but a confidant, mentor, and guide.

Sheds provide a relaxed, non-judgemental environment where men can work side by side and shoulder-to-shoulder, learn and develop practical skills, and share conversations—or simply enjoy the company of others.

### The power of intergenerational mentorship

Bringing younger men into Sheds creates opportunities for mentorship, mutual learning, and social growth. Older members can share life experience, trades, and skills, while younger participants can also bring modern skills, energy, digital literacy, and fresh ideas.

This collaboration benefits both generations: it challenges stereotypes, builds understanding, and fosters healthy masculinity rooted in cooperation, respect, and shared purpose.

Intergenerational Sheds offer a fresh model for cross-generational connection, helping communities grow stronger and more supportive.

*In this edition, we share the story of Benny Norquoy (34), a proud member of Westray Men's Shed since its very first day. Benny has shared his story as he is passionate about encouraging more younger men to visit their local Shed and experience it for themselves.*



### Intergenerational Shed Model opportunities:

- **Collaborative projects:** Young and older members work side by side on shared learning initiatives, such as community builds, repairs, or school gardening programmes.
- **Mentorship opportunities:** Young men can learn from older Sheddors' skills and life experience, while older members gain fresh perspectives and energy.
- **Tailored activities and projects:** Expanding Shed activities to engage younger participants' interests, creativity, and skills.
- **Access to new funding streams:** Opens doors to funding specifically aimed at youth development, wellbeing, and community projects.

### A future built together

By opening doors to younger men, Sheds can become a bridge across generations, creating spaces where experience meets energy, and wisdom meets innovation.

One promising avenue lies in a potential partnership between the Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) and Youth Scotland, the national charity supporting community-based youth work. The two charities recently met at the Royal Highland Show and discussed collaboration (pictured below).

Both organisations share core values around community, health, and empowerment. Working together, they could open a new chapter in intergenerational support and learning across the country.

**By nurturing the next generation of Sheddors, we are not just preserving a legacy—we are strengthening and future-proofing it.**

**The tools are already on the bench, now let's build that bridge.**





I have the great privilege of working with well over 100 Sheds in my patch:

- 9 in Moray
- 8 in Aberdeen City
- 24 in Aberdeenshire
- 6 in Angus
- 4 in Dundee
- 5 in Midlothian
- 7 in East Lothian
- 4 in West Lothian
- 2 in Falkirk
- 2 in Clackmannanshire
- 2 in Stirling
- 10 in the Scottish Borders
- 4 in the City of Edinburgh
- 8 in Fife
- 10 in Perth and Kinross
- 2 in Shetland; and
- 6 in Orkney

New Sheds are forming all the time, including Blackburn/Kinellar, Kintore, Inverbervie, Mastrick, Newmachar,

Dalkeith (reboot), and Newtongrange.

The outlook, therefore, is very bright in working towards our vision: “that one day every man in Scotland will have the opportunity of access to a local Men’s Shed.”

Six successful Men’s Shed Network meetings have been held over the last couple of months. Aberdeen City/Aberdeenshire met at Banchory; Dundee and Angus convened at Arbroath; Fife gathered at Glenrothes; Moray congregated at Fochabers; Perth and Kinross Sheddies assembled at Stanley; and Forth Valley got together at Denny and Bonnybridge.

The meetings included collective problem-solving of hot issues like safe working, premises (including community asset transfer),

insurance, intergenerational working, funding, social prescribing, women in Sheds, and renewables. Project ideas and successes were shared, and tools and equipment were exchanged. The highlight of these meetings is a tour of the host Shed, accompanied by socialising over a fly cup and a fine piece — or sometimes a three-course meal, as enjoyed at the Banchory Legion.

The meeting are also the perfect opportunity for SMSA to share its latest news including encouraging Sheds to take up the Scottish Community Alliance grant for Shed-to-Shed visits and get involved in the regional Scottish Men’s Shed of the Year Awards.

**Tim Green (SMSA East Coast Development Officer)**  
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## Upcoming 2025 Regional Shed Network Meetings

- **Fife**—Tuesday 16th September at The Shed@Bayview from 11am
- **Aberdeen City/Aberdeenshire**—Saturday 20th September 2025 at Aberchirder & District Men’s Shed from 10am; and Wednesday 8th October 2025 at Banff, Macduff & District Men’s Shed at 10am

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



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 the Scottish Borders*





## Lots Happening on The West Coast!

There's plenty of life and energy around the Men's Sheds across the West Coast, with groups busy making plans, building connections, and strengthening their communities.

Over in Dalry, the Men's Shed is pushing ahead with relocation plans, exploring a number of options for their next chapter. Meanwhile, their close neighbours Garnock Valley Men's Shed (GVMS) is looking pristine, filled with the buzz of conversation as well as the hum of power tools. These pioneering Sheds are also leading the way, with Men's Shed Dalry member Gus McLafferty now joining as an SMSA trustee, and of course our very own David Gardner of GVMS as our long-standing Chairman.

In Bishopbriggs, a new Shed is being established by local group Better Briggs. We caught up with them to hear about their exciting vision for a Shed in this bustling part of Glasgow. We spoke about bike maintenance, inter-Shed visits, and governance. At another part of the city, Ruchazie Men's Shed has taken to the airwaves, producing summer radio blogs to promote their activities. These are being supported by a community education student, who is completing the project as part of his university placement.

We have also been out on the road recently giving a talk on the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement at a public meeting in Kilmarnock, and following this, it was great to see representatives from the Kilmarnock group at the latest Ayrshire Sheds Network gathering, where discussion centred on the welfare of Shedders and updates from a thriving Shed scene.

The Wishaw Shedders (pictured right have also been making headlines, recently hosting an open day in their new temporary home at a local church hall. Never ones to stand still, they already have an asset transfer request in with North Lanarkshire Council, paving the way for a permanent base. We wish them every success with this. Across Renfrewshire, both the Barrhead and Linwood Sheds recently welcomed a deputation from Newton

Mearns Baptist Church, who are keen to establish a 'Mearns Shed' of their own. Further south, in Auchinleck, an enterprising group has secured premises and is well on the way to developing a new Shed in this former mining community. Even further south, the Isle of Whithorn Shed is pushing ahead with plans in a stunning corner of the Solway Coast. It's always a pleasure to visit on a beautiful sunny day (just wait until the weather's miserable, I hear you say).

In Lanarkshire, Larkhall Men's Shed has also been buzzing, with members exploring laser-etching and discussing fresh opportunities to serve the local community. We popped in to chat, banter, and talk about all manner of things, even cycling (not again, Stewart!), where we shared stories and laughs with ex racing cyclist John Robertson.

Finally, a big thank you goes to Euan Lees and Rosemary Ramsey of North Ayrshire Council, who recently hosted a well-attended; Funding for Sheds' workshop in Kilwinning Library. Their support was warmly welcomed by Sheds across the region.

From Ayrshire to Renfrewshire and beyond, it's clear that the Shed movement on the West Coast is thriving, with lots of exciting new developments still to come...watch this space!

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## Shed development gathers pace in the Highlands

The **Kyle of Sutherland Men's Shed**, which currently meets in the development trust barn in Ardgay, has now grown to 25 members and is making steady progress towards securing a site for its own dedicated premises.

Public meetings in **Kinlochbervie** and **Acharacle** have also sparked exciting developments. In fact, the Acharacle group was offered premises just a week after our first gathering! While Men's Shed development in remote Highland communities can be challenging due to smaller populations, the upside is that word travels quickly and opportunities arise fast.

A couple of visits to the **Ardnamurchan peninsula** soon led to interest from the community land association at **Lochaline in Morven**, and an initial meeting is already on the calendar. Across the water on **Mull**, contact has been made with the Mull and Iona Trust. A meeting is set for later this month, and

they're already asking about visiting the **Fort William Men's Shed**—quite the commitment given it's a two-ferry journey away!

Alongside these new developments, several existing Sheds have been visited recently, including **Nairn, Beaulie, Glenurquhart, Maryburgh, Spey, Badenoch, Ullapool**, and Kyle of Sutherland itself.

At Maryburgh, a **Shed-Wise men's health awareness session** was delivered, receiving excellent feedback such as:

*"Let's talk and not bottle things up"*

*"It was good to share experiences"*

*"Bring in more speakers about health"*

*"Informative, with light-hearted points on a serious subject"*

*"Make this a regular monthly event"*



New contacts now include **Helmsdale community education**, the **community land association at Lochaline**, and the **Mull and Iona Trust**—all signs of the growing enthusiasm for Men's Sheds across the Highlands!

**Ross Murray**  
SMSA Highlands/Islands Development Officer  
07777134950  
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### Does the SMSA Development Team 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>

## SHEDLOADS OF OPPORTUNITIES



FUNDING | CONSULTATIONS | CONNECTIONS | OPPORTUNITIES  
*'Shedloads of Opportunities', the SMSA's roundup of all of relevant funding, consultations, connections and opportunities open to Scottish Men's Sheds, is available to view in our online resource area (login required)—accessible to the Shed contacts registered with the SMSA.*





## Out with the old, Inn with the new: Kirkmuirhill and Blackwood Men's Shed pulls a pint-sized miracle!

*Tools are down (for now) as the Kirkmuirhill and Blackwood Shedders change bar stools for workbenches with ambitious plans to transform a former pub into a hub for sawdust, stories, and social connection. Thanks to a major funding boost, this DIY dream is set to become a reality—revitalising a once-popular local hot spot and giving it a fresh, new purpose at the heart of the community.*

Graham Stewart of Kirkmuirhill and Blackwood Men's Shed (KBMS) said: "Our Shed has been running since 2019 and it is quite remarkable the impact it has made for members and the local community. The Shed has been described as a lifesaver by members, and fellow supporters who recognise the difference it is making in such a small village community.

"The Shed, currently based in a single container in an ideal location in the centre of Kirkmuirhill village, has unfortunately very much outgrown these premises with the number of regular members that attend."

In this next step, KBMS is hammering out a bold new future—with the help of a former pub 'Kirkmuirhill Inn', a generous windfall, and a whole lot of community spirit.

The building sits a very short distance from the Shed's current premises to

the rear of Thornton Road Community Centre and the Shed board could not pass up the opportunity to retain their prime location.

The Shed secured up to £96,500 from the [Renewable Energy Fund \(REF\)](#) to purchase the old Kirkmuirhill Inn and it won't be long until this once-bustling boozer will soon be buzzing with banter, sawdust, and solidarity as it becomes the Shed's new base.

In a positive twist of irony, the old pub is set to become a Men's Shed, where health, purpose, and community take centre stage.

In addition to REF, support to the tune of £25,000 from both Nadara Auchrobert Wind Farm Community Fund administered by Foundation Scotland, and Point North Kype Muir Wind Farm Community Fund is putting the wind beneath the Shed's wings—helping bring new life to a building that's been sitting empty, and a community that's ready to build stronger connections. Promoting exactly what these funders promote—helping grassroots groups do something truly transformative for community benefit.

"We're absolutely delighted that our bids were approved," said Graham. "The benefits of our Shed have far exceeded our expectations with members also regularly assisting local schools, community groups, local nature projects and providing historical walking tours for members and the local community.

"This is a real game-changer for us. With more men wanting to join, we

really need the space—and now we've got the chance to expand and create a hub not just for our members, but for the whole community."

*"Whilst we have not concluded the purchase of the pub yet, we hope to have everything done and dusted within the next month or so. There's no chance of 'last orders' for our Shed any time soon, so watch this space."*

KBMS has a two-year renovation plan to give the property a full upgrade—making space for the usual Shed camaraderie and creativity, plus wider community facilities to serve both Kirkmuirhill and Blackwood.

Alison Brown, Head of Enterprise and Sustainable Development, added: "It's great news that the Men's Shed will be able to use the REF money in this way, giving them a base in their local community for many years to come. When completed, it will be a fantastic asset for the local community."

Men's Sheds across South Lanarkshire are supported by the Council's [Seniors Together](#) programme, aimed at improving the lives of older people. You can learn more about the REF and its impact by visiting the [South Lanarkshire Council website](#).

**Hot off the press!** Just before this edition of The Scottish Shedder was released, we received the fantastic news that the Shed's planning application, including change of use, has been approved by South Lanarkshire Council. Congratulations!





## Inverurie & District Men's Shed: Building a Brighter Future

***Exciting developments are underway at [Inverurie & District Men's Shed \(IDMS\)](#) as work on the new premises continues at pace. The hobbies room has now been completed and is already buzzing with activity and their talented group of modellers have moved in, alongside the ever-enthusiastic music group. Meanwhile, the 'Fix-It' workshop is in full swing, with members busy tinkering, repairing, and creating.***

IDMS Chairman Alex Smith said: "Our new premises were sparked by the growing needs of our members. Our previous space had simply become too small.

"In May last year, we reached out to the community through our Facebook page, explaining our plans and asking for public support as we applied to Aberdeenshire Council for a Community Asset Transfer on an adjacent building.

"The response was incredible. We were overwhelmed by the positive comments and words of encouragement from local residents and businesses. Thanks to that community backing, our application was approved and the formalities completed.

"Before the larger workshop equipment can be installed, our Sheddars await the final installation of dust extraction in the main area. Thanks to Inverurie-based electricians, Hosie Electrical, who not only rewired the entire workshop but also made a generous donation to Shed funds, progress has been swift and encouraging. We extend our heartfelt thanks to them for their support.

"While we still have a lot of work ahead before the new Shed is fully operational, the future is looking bright and we thank our community for standing with us."

IDMS is not just about woodwork and hobbies—it's also a place for learning and community awareness and the Sheddars recently welcomed Bob McKinney, Enforcement Officer from the Trading Standards

Department, and PC Mike Urquhart from Police Scotland's Crime Reduction team.

Alex said: "Bob delivered an eye-opening talk on how to spot internet scams and doorstep fraudsters.

"Key takeaways included the importance of secure passwords, staying vigilant when buying through platforms like Facebook Marketplace and eBay, and being cautious when using public WiFi—especially the 'free' connections found in cafes and hotels. The talk was extremely beneficial for our members.

"Then in July, Dr Patrick Fitch, a respiratory consultant, visited to share valuable insights on sleep apnoea. A condition that causes breathing to repeatedly stop and start during sleep, obstructive sleep apnoea is particularly common in men and can severely impact quality of life.

"Dr Fitch explained the symptoms, which include loud snoring, gasping during sleep, and persistent daytime fatigue. He also introduced the Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) machine—an effective treatment for sleep apnea.

"Fortunately, despite the topic, none of the Sheddars nodded off during the talk—instead, they left feeling much better informed!

"We love visitors! So, if you're curious about what we do or simply fancy a cuppa and a chat, pop in and say hello. Come along and bring a friend. There's always something happening and a warm welcome awaits you.

"If you don't find activities that quite fit your interests, let us know! Our Shed is member-led, and we're here to create experiences that suit your needs.

"Our Shed is all about community, connection, and creativity—and with our additional premises, there's always room for more!"

**IDMS is open on Mondays and Thursdays from 10am—4pm at Unit 19 Harlaw Way.**





## Morrison Construction builds community with Sheds

***Two Scottish Sheds – Rosemount & Midstocket and Inverness Men's Shed – have been given a huge boost thanks to generous donations and hands-on support from Morrison Construction.***

As part of its developing partnership with the Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA), Morrison Construction has been reaching out to local Sheds to support their growth and sustainability.

Earlier this month, Rosemount & Midstocket Men's Shed turned to Morrison Construction for help sourcing materials for the second stage of their renovation project.

The Morrison Construction team at *The Market Project*, alongside MARCH Engineering Ltd, stepped in quickly – donating vital electrical materials and timber to keep the build on schedule.

Katie Strachan, CSR Manager at Morrison Construction, said: "We were pleased to support Rosemount & Midstocket Men's Shed with their workshop renovation. The Sheddars do fantastic work in the community, and it's rewarding to play a part in helping them create a welcoming space for connection, skills-sharing and wellbeing."

The Sheddars were equally grateful for the timely support, saying: "This allows us to proceed with the build and keep to the construction

timetable. The assistance is greatly appreciated."

Meanwhile in Inverness, the leading Scottish construction company generously donated a large supply of timber from their *Northern Meeting Park* site – materials that would otherwise have been sent to landfill.

The Sheddars quickly put the wood to good use, turning it into a wide variety of practical and creative projects.

Some of their projects includes:

- A new wood store for drying logs for woodturning projects, helping prevent cracks in finished items.
- A covered outdoor cutting area, doubling up as additional storage space.
- New driveway gates – a larger project than the Shed had attempted before, but one that proved very successful.
- A covered outdoor workspace with a fitted workbench, drill, and table saw – transforming outside areas into usable work zones.
- A specialist frame for restoring a 19th-century clock mechanism, created entirely from donated materials.

- A children's mud kitchen, turning tool rests, and various repairs around the workshop.

Inverness Men's Shed Chairman Murdo MacIver shared his thanks: "We very much appreciate your support. These donations have allowed us to take on projects we would not otherwise have been able to complete. We would be delighted to welcome you for a visit at any time."

Morrison Construction's Communities and Social Impact Coordinator, Mia Keith, summed up the company's enthusiasm for supporting Scottish Sheds: "It's wonderful to see materials from our sites being repurposed so creatively by the Men's Sheds."

Instead of ending up as waste, they are now part of community projects that bring people together, improve wellbeing, and create lasting value."

The partnership between Morrison Construction and the Scottish Men's Sheds movement is already making a tangible difference – turning donations into spaces, tools, and projects that keep Sheds thriving for years to come.

# Morrison Construction







**Striking the right chord:  
Renfrew Men's Shed hits  
a high note with new  
musical neighbour**

*Renfrew Men's Shed recently tuned into one of Renfrew's newest local hits—Fitzpatrick Academy of Music. Located on Fulbar Street, just around the corner from the Shed, the thriving new music business is quickly becoming a key note in the community for musicians of all ages through its tailored one-to-one music lessons.*

John Carty, founder of Renfrew Men's Shed, reflected on the visit: "A few months ago, we noticed a fantastic new facility opening up in Renfrew. It turns out the owner, Jay Fitzpatrick, is an ex-pupil of mine from my teaching days, so it was easy to reconnect.

"Jay and his team have orchestrated a wonderful integration into the

Renfrew community, and the popularity of their courses is testament to their hard work and dedication."

The Men's Shed, largely made up of retired men, were full of admiration for young entrepreneurs like Jay, whose drive and dedication are hitting all the right notes for both business and community growth.

In a harmonious collaboration, Renfrew Men's Shed partnered with Fitzpatrick Academy of Music to refurbish and donate guitars, which will be passed on free of charge to the local high school.

Graham Ness, music teacher at Trinity High School, praised the initiative: "Over the past year, the Men's Shed has done a phenomenal job giving broken, unused instruments a repair shop style 'tune-up.'

"Thanks to their efforts, our pupils now have instruments ready to play, and we are extremely grateful to both Renfrew Men's Shed and Fitzpatrick Academy of Music for hitting the right note with generosity."

Among the Shed members, 89-year-old jazz enthusiast Harry Birrell shared his excitement about the collaboration: "I live just across the road, and it's wonderful to see this resource being fully used by enthusiastic youngsters. As Shakespeare said, 'If music be the food of love, play on.'"

Jay Fitzpatrick welcomed the visit from the Men's Shed warmly: "It was fantastic to host my former teachers and the Shed members. We're loving our time in Renfrew, and really appreciating the community support."

During the visit, Shed members toured the school's impressive facilities and enjoyed a special performance by local musicians Ciaran Whyte and his father, Gordon Whyte (pictured right with John Carty), who are rehearsing for a new album and their annual gig at the Edinburgh Fringe.

Gordon, who also taught Jay, praised the school's dedication to fostering local talent. The visit was another meaningful chord struck in building a strong, interconnected community, celebrating the rhythm of mentorship, the harmony of shared passion, and the power of music across generations.



Harry, pictured here front and centre surrounded by his Shedder and musician friends



We were saddened to learn, just as this issue was going to press, of the passing of Renfrew Shedder Harry Birrell, aged 89. Harry was a proud Renfrew man, who greatly enjoyed his time at the Shed, and both he and his family were delighted by his recent visit to this fantastic community resource. His laughter, stories, and presence will be deeply missed. Our heartfelt condolences go to his family, friends, and fellow Sheddors.





## Calling all model railway enthusiasts!

The Nairn Men's Shed's model railway group is keen to connect with other Scottish Men's Sheds who share an interest in model railways—or would like to get involved.

The aim would be to form a Scottish Men's Sheds model railway group to share knowledge, experiences, and ideas. This could include visiting other Scottish Sheds, hosting workshops, or even organising an annual gathering to showcase projects.

Even if your Shed doesn't currently have a model railway, but would like to start one, they would love to hear from you!

**Interested or have ideas about how this could take shape?** Get in touch with Nairn Men's Shed at [nairnshedmrg@gmail.com](mailto:nairnshedmrg@gmail.com)

**The Nairn Shedders will be offering a model railway workshop at the SMSA Gathering on Friday 3rd October 2025 in Perth!**



## Mintlaw Shed: Where timber, tools and teamwork transform lives

SMSA visited [Mintlaw & District Mens Shed](#), where their picture framing enterprise, [Aden Picture Framing](#), continues to thrive. Thanks to a grant from [The National Lottery Community Fund Scotland](#), the Shed has acquired a quad bike, which they put to excellent use around [Aden Country Park](#) - most notably gathering fallen timber from Fairy Woods to fuel their log burner.

The Shed's new picture framing operation is proving to be popular and continues to be a cornerstone of its activities, giving members a creative outlet to learn new skills while generating a steady contribution to the Shed's running costs.

A vintage Fergie tractor restoration is underway as a rewarding long-term project. They're also set to build custom racks and shelves for [Mintlaw Boys FC's](#) kit. Their intergenerational partnership with [Mintlaw Academy](#) is going

strong, with four more young men finding employment—including one who sailed in to join the Tall Ships Race crew!

Two of the young students, Charlie and Shayne, are pictured directly above working on a front box for the Fergie tractor.

As the new school term begins, another cohort of students will benefit from the skills, support and wisdom shared by this inspiring and dynamic team of elders.



## Men of Leith Men's Shed: Crafting Community in Newhaven

**Men of Leith Men's Shed** in Newhaven is thriving under a newly-signed seven-year license and profit-sharing agreement with the Heart of Newhaven.

Their Lottery-funded lean-to has transformed Shed life, serving as both a covered barbecue and social area and, more often, a versatile outdoor workshop.

Shedders were busy preparing timber for planters using Shou Sugi Ban, a traditional Japanese method of preserving wood by charring its surface. They are also fulfilling an order for combined room dividers, cupboards, and shelves for the Heart of Newhaven.

Other recent projects include a climbing frame, play bus, picket fence, and a hidey-hole shed for a former bowling green now transformed into a play park. A local church choir has also benefitted from a conductor's podium constructed by the Shed.

The Shed's work isn't just practical—it's educational, and first-year medical students visit regularly to observe the physical and mental health benefits that Men's Sheds bring to their communities.

**Pictured right:** A beautifully crafted, unusual commission with charred surface for Men of Leith Shedder Dougie. Now in a garden in Driftmark.



## Galashiels Men's Shed shines as Asda's Community Diamond

**Galashiels Men's Shed** shines bright like a diamond as it receives the honour of Asda's Community Diamond Award—recognising its exceptional contributions and ongoing commitment to making a positive difference in the local community.

The Asda Community Diamond Awards—part of the supermarket's 60th anniversary celebrations—is prestigious recognition given to local community groups and good causes that make a significant impact within their communities.

The awards—presented by Asda's Community Champions—acknowledge the efforts of those who are thought of as 'community diamonds'.

Individuals and groups who go above and beyond to make a positive difference are celebrated—and the team at Gala Men's Shed certainly fits the bill.

Their wide-ranging projects, from building planters for local care homes to crafting mud kitchens for nurseries, have brought lasting value and joy to people of all ages across the area.

Shed Secretary Gordon Daly shared his thoughts on receiving the award: "We're absolutely delighted to be recognised with the Community Diamond Award. Everything we do is about giving back and strengthening our community—and to see that effort acknowledged like this means a great deal to all of us."

"Our members bring a wealth of skills and experience and dedicate countless hours to community service. Their efforts not only support the wellbeing of others but also foster social connection, reduce isolation, and promote purpose and pride among members."

**Receiving the Community Diamond Award is a proud moment for all involved and well-deserved recognition of the Shed's commitment to making Galashiels a better place for all. Congratulations to all at the Shed—your impact is truly inspiring!**





Like so many men, my age, I find myself with nothing to do and no one to do it with. My wife and I are, what they now call, carers for each other. Oh how the world has changed.

We moved up to Gorebridge in 2000, to look after my father in law. What didn't move was our social life. I worked till 2005 until my health deteriorated. We looked after our grandkids through their school years so that kept us busy, then my wife, who has always been a crafter, joined a club and once a week I drive her there to meet with women of another ilk.

I was happy with my little shed out the back, and the idea of creating a place for men who had reached that time where they had a history to share, a skillset to pass on, expertise in something or other and the patience to give other men the benefit of their experience.

Just after Covid killed so many people and the need for a place that helped men with their health issues I tried to start a Men's Shed.

Nothing happened, no funding was available and I lost the will to try and enable this facility. My wife who was attending her day club tried to get me to shake off my worries and find a way to get myself out and about.

In late summer of 2024 I saw an item about Dalkeith Men's Shed and decided to take a chance. I remember my first day at the shed and was quite happy to join in with the activities available. Here I am today and I don't know what I would do with myself if I didn't have the shed to attend.

The blokes that I meet here on a Friday are from various backgrounds but all have the same needs. We need to be around people of our kind, we need a cuppa to loosen us from the ties that bind, we need things to do and most importantly people to do them for.

We have a motto, "Together, we can", a simple statement that lifts us up and reminds us that we are not alone and don't need to be lonely. It's simplicity removes the obstacles we find around us and frees us to explore the needs of others and how to deliver for them.

My name is Ronnie Tappenden, I am 66 years old, not dead and I am a shedder. Bring it on!

**Ronnie Tappentan**  
**Dalkeith Men's Shed**

## The Heart of the Shed

*Written by Ronnie Tappentan of Dalkeith Men's Shed*

**In Dalkeith town where the river bends, A humble place brings strangers friends. Not built of grandeur, steel, or gold, But timber tales and hands grown bold.**

**The Men's Shed stands with open door, A refuge from the daily chore. Where laughter echoes, tools are shared, And stories bloom from lives once spared.**

**A kettle hums, the banter flies, With sawdust dreams and knowing eyes. Retired hands find work anew, In fixing things—and fixing you.**

**From birdhouse builds to garden beds, To mending hearts and clearing heads, Each screw and nail, each measured line, Marks healing made by grand design.**

**No judgment here, no race to win, Just quiet pride in what's within. A brotherhood of grit and grace, A sacred, sawdust-scented place.**

**So raise a mug to those who tread The well-worn path to Dalkeith Shed. For in that space, both strong and kind, You'll find the soul of humankind.**



## Handy IT tips—Shedder to Shedder

***Following the four helpful IT guides featured in the April 2025 edition of The Scottish Shedder, Barry Yorwerth—a member of Stonehaven and District Men's Shed—has been busy compiling even more handy helpsheets covering a range of computer-related topics for Windows and Apple Mac users. He's now kindly offering to share these resources with other Sheds across Scotland.***

Barry said: "Group IT classes just didn't work at our Shed—some members felt embarrassed or lacked confidence. However, our regular email tips have been far more effective."

Barry is planning to compile the guides into an eBook and hopes sharing them through the SMSA will benefit others and save duplication of effort.

**[Outlook Shortcuts \(Windows\) >>](#) Speed up your inbox tasks with this handy Outlook Shortcuts (Windows) guide**

**[Basic Shortcuts for Microsoft Excel >>](#) Work smarter in Excel with these basic keyboard shortcuts for Microsoft Word (Windows)**

**[Shortcuts for Apple-Mac Machines >>](#) Make your Mac work for you with these essential Apple keyboard shortcuts**

**[Windows Key Shortcuts >>](#) Unlock quick access and time-savers with these handy Windows key shortcuts**





## A cuppa, a fine piece and a year of growing together

*The smell of fine pieces and blooming appreciation filled the air on the 20th June 2025, as members of the Bridge of Don Men's Shed were welcomed by pupils from Forehill Primary School for a heartwarming thank-you event.*

The invitation—to 'a cuppa and a fine piece' in classic Aberdeen style with delicious tablet on offer—was more than just a social call; it was a celebration of a remarkable year of collaboration, learning, and growth through the success of their intergenerational gardening project.

Held to mark the first anniversary of the school's polytunnel, the gathering brought together young hands and seasoned green thumbs to reflect on a thriving intergenerational partnership.

The polytunnel, installed in June 2024 with support from the Shed, has become a centrepiece of Forehill's outdoor learning. With guidance from the men, pupils have grown vegetables, herbs, and even tropical curiosities like the Calamondin citrus plants recently donated by local supporter Costco Aberdeen.

Over the past year, the Sheddars have supported the school's gardening and allotment projects, guiding the pupils in everything from planting and propagation to composting and seasonal harvesting.



Eric Bisset of Bridge of Don Men's Shed reflected on the day with pride: "Seeing how enthusiastic the kids are—and how much they've taken in—makes every spade of effort worth it. We started with a patch of soil and a tunnel, and now we've got a garden full of potential and young minds full of curiosity."

The Shed took the opportunity to present the pupils with an engraved shield to mark the occasion and the children, in turn,

offered their thanks through handmade cards of appreciation.

Teachers and Sheddars alike described it as a moving moment of mutual respect and shared purpose. Pupil Support Assistant Emma Robertson said: "It was a delight to have the Men's Shed members come along to the school. We are so appreciative of the work they have done with the pupils and the garden area. The boys and girls have loved it.

"We absolutely love the shield and the nutcracker gifted to us. We appreciate that so much and they will look lovely in the school's reception area.

"The partnership with the Men's Shed has truly transformed our gardening project and exceeded our expectations. It's about community, mentorship and showing the children the power of working together across generations."





## Foggie Shedders enjoy a surprise donation, outings and summer fun

Aberchirder & District Men's Shed recently enjoyed a burst of community support and a series of fun summer social events.

The Shed had a stall at Aberchirder Community Council's annual Fun Day in McRoberts Park, featuring information about the Shed, a lucky square draw, and a selection of handmade items to raise funds.

The highlight of the day came as a delightful surprise—a £100 cheque donation from the local fire station, warmly received by Alan, the Shed chairman.

The Shed also supported the North Scotland Garden Show on the 13th and 14th June 2025, working alongside the Banff, Macduff, and Findochty Sheds.

In addition to fundraising and community outreach, the Shed has been treating its members to memorable social outings.

On the 22nd July, they visited the Alford Transport Museum and Alford Heritage Museum, enjoying an informative tour from Neil at the Transport Museum and a special opening from John at the Heritage Museum. The day concluded with lunch at Chloe's Kitchen, much to the delight of all attendees.

Summer fun continued on the 3rd August with a BBQ for Shed members and their families. Both the museum visit and the BBQ were thoroughly enjoyed, fostering friendship and camaraderie among the group.

Looking ahead, the Shed is preparing for a coffee morning in September, offering another opportunity for members and the community to connect and support the Foggie Shed.



# HEAD TO THE SHED THIS INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY!



Scottish Men's Shed  
Open Doors Day

Wed  
19 Nov  
2025

**COMMUNITY | CONNECTIONS | CAMARADERIE**

To find out more and register your Shed for Open Doors Day 2025, check out [scottishmsa.org.uk/opendoorsday](https://scottishmsa.org.uk/opendoorsday)



## From Shed to Screen: DadsWork SCIO Men's Shed supports local student film

*The **DadsWork SCIO Men's Shed** didn't flounder when a fourth-year BA (Hons) Film student from Edinburgh Napier University reeled them in for help with a unique cinematic project—a period drama called 'Guttin' Quines'. Hooked on the idea, the DadsWork SCIO Men's Shed members were more than happy to dive right in and lend a hand not only sourcing but also creating some of the key props.*

Set in a 1920s fishing village on Scotland's East Coast, *Guttin' Quines* tells the story of Jeannie—a farmer's daughter turned fisherman's wife—who takes up work as a fish gutter at the local harbour in an attempt to find a community in her small town and fill her days whilst her husband is at sea.

As Jeannie struggles to befriend local women, bond with her fellow workers, and adjust to the gruelling labour—tensions rise and the community is also shaken by reports of a missing fishing boat.

We shall not give any more of the storyline away but much like our Scottish Men's Sheds, *Guttin' Quines* is all about community, connection, and finding your place when life shifts course.

The production team, working closely with the DadsWork SCIO Men's Shed and the Scottish Fisheries Museum in Anstruther, had already secured a number of historical props, but one crucial item was proving elusive: a traditional gutting trough.

Never ones to shy away from a challenge, the DadsWork SCIO Shed members got straight to work, crafting a large, authentic-style wooden trough to be used during the gutting scenes. Built to exact specifications, the prop was soon ready for transport to the film's primary location in the fishing village of Pittenweem.

"We were only too happy to help out," said DadsWork SCIO Men's Shed Project Manager Kevin Young. "It was a brilliant project to be involved with, and it gave us a real sense of pride to see our work featured on screen."

As a gesture of thanks, the team were invited to attend the premiere of *Guttin' Quines* at The Three Sisters in Edinburgh—where they were given the honorary title of 'Prop Masters' for their contribution.

This intergenerational collaboration not only showcases the creative talent of young Scottish filmmakers, but also shines a light on the community spirit and supportive ethos of Scottish Men's Sheds.







## From Isolation to Inspiration: Charlie finds his place at the Shed

*When Charlie Johnston (88) first heard about the Men's Shed, he didn't think it was for him. He'd been through a rough patch—more than one, in fact—and the idea of walking into a room full of strangers felt like one step too far. But as Charlie now puts it, walking through the doors of [Kirkmuirhill and Blackwood Men's Shed](#) changed everything.*

"I've had my share of dark days," Charlie says. "I suffered from depression, and there were times when I didn't think I'd ever pull myself out of it."

But it wasn't just his own pain weighing heavy—Charlie speaks about the loss of his grandson, who passed away at just 26 years old.

"My daughter lost her son... so I pray every day to help her through it. She's strong, but none of us will ever get over it and certainly won't forget."

On occasion feeling isolated being in the house most days, Charlie's confidence had all but disappeared. Support services reached out, suggesting the Men's Shed might be a good place to start reconnecting.

"At first I said no. I didn't think I could manage it—I didn't believe in myself anymore."

But with a little encouragement from a support worker, Charlie agreed to

visit. "They brought me in one day, just for an hour or so. I met some of the guys, and they were all nice and friendly. No pressure—just a warm welcome."

That one visit was enough to plant a seed. When the support worker suggested another trip, Charlie surprised himself and said: "Tell you what—I'll go myself this time."

"And that's just what I did. From that moment, things began to change. Slowly, steadily, the gloom started to lift. "It just blossomed," Charlie says.

"The guys joke away, they talk to me—it's brilliant. I'm probably the oldest in the Shed now at 88 years old, but I don't mind that at all.

"They've all been great. Some days I'm not much help, but I am happy to watch with a cuppa in hand."

**"It keeps me connected—not just with the guys, but with the whole village. It's helped me find myself again."**

Beyond the banter and the buzz of tools, the Shed has given Charlie something harder to define: belonging. "It keeps me connected—not just with the guys, but with the whole village. It's helped me find myself again."

Charlie's story is one of quiet resilience—a reminder that even when the weight of life feels too heavy to carry, a friendly face, a shared laugh, or a place to belong and have purpose can make all the difference.

And sometimes, all it takes is that first step through the Shed door.

[Click here](#) to find your local Shed on the SMSA map.





## A Personal Story Continued: Growth and New Horizons

*Almost a year has passed since we shared Lossie Shedder Rod Ainsworth's story. Here Rod, now 81, reflects on an incredible journey of growth, connection, and creativity at the Shed.*

"Last September, I told the story of how [Lossiemouth Men's Shed](#) took its first steps and how we established ourselves as a hub for men in Moray to come together, build skills, and create something meaningful," says Rod. "Since then, so much has happened, and it's been amazing to see how the Shed has blossomed, and how much I've personally gained from being part of it."

One of the biggest developments at the Shed has been the expansion of the workshop. Thanks to securing a second container, the Shed has doubled its workspace resulting in more members joining in and the addition of new machinery.

Rod praises the invaluable support from Axminster Tools, with our Scottish Shed rep Mark Bloomfield working closely with the Moray Sheds to provide not just equipment but also guidance — a partnership that has truly elevated what the Shed can achieve.

The workshop has been producing popular items like bird nesting boxes, bat houses, and insect hotels, all in strong demand from their local community and for their own gardens!

The creative spirit however extends way beyond woodworking. The Shed has been involved in an innovative project assisting the local rowing club to develop a custom foot and seat rowing attachment, led by one of their members who is part of the club. Meanwhile, other members are transforming whisky barrel staves and lids into stunning coffee tables and

stylish wall fittings—a true celebration of local heritage and craftsmanship. Community connections are growing stronger than ever. Rod tells of how the Shed has reached out to their neighbouring communities and have connected with many including Roseisle.

The Shed has been building reciprocal links with their neighbours in Roseisle, with members attending and supporting each other's events and delivering talks.

"One speaker from Roseisle delivered a talk to our Sheddors. This was so successful that he is coming again, and this time, the event will be opened up to our own community with the event taking place in our Community Hub."

A particularly moving moment came when the Shed helped organise a memorial service to honour victims of a wartime air crash in Lossiemouth — an event that united local residents, schools, council members, the RAF, and even the last eyewitness to the tragedy. Local children placed handmade crosses on the memorial stone, and the community's shared remembrance left a lasting impact, highlighting the powerful role the Shed plays in bringing people together.

That spirit of community was further exemplified when His Majesty The King visited RAF Lossiemouth. The Wing Commander asked the Shed to create a fitting gift for the visit — a whisky bottle and glass stand crafted from the old Lossiemouth wooden bridge. "I'm sure the King will remember the visit fondly," Rod smiles, "We certainly will."

"The Shed has seen an increase in membership, which I'm sure is due to the publicity we are receiving and the way our Shed is managed. The Shed philosophy is, that if you simply want to come and meet for a chat and a coffee, or if you want to hone your existing skills or develop new ones in the

workshop, all are welcome. If you can go home smiling, then we have done something right."

Rod treasures the connections across the Moray region and attending the quarterly [Shed Network meetings](#) hosted at neighbouring Sheds—sharing stories, swapping skills, and always walking away uplifted. "We don't talk politics or news — just Shed stuff — and it always leaves me with a happy heart. It doesn't get much better than that."

Finally, a bittersweet note — the Lossiemouth Shed is bidding farewell to one of its founding members, David Thompson. David's dedication in building and equipping the workshop has been crucial to the Shed's success. As he moves to a new part of Scotland, Rod is confident that if there isn't a Men's Shed there yet, there soon will be.

"On behalf of all of us at Lossiemouth Men's Shed, we thank David for everything and wish him and his family every happiness in their new home."

Before closing, Rod extended heartfelt congratulations to Jason Schroeder, the visionary behind the SMSA who was recently honoured with a Doctor of Business Administration by Robert Gordon University. "This honour recognises Jason's exceptional contribution to the Scottish Sheds Movement to enhance men's lives across Scotland through innovative, community-driven initiatives and inspires Sheddors far and wide."

"With that said, I believe, every single Scottish Men's Shed including ours, has a very important part to play providing a similar contribution to our localities. Every member volunteers and invests his time, energies, funny stories and skills to the Shed and without their commitment, Sheds would simply not survive."





***The SMSA caught up with Benny Norquoy (34), a part-time gardening assistant and a proud member of [Westray Men's Shed](#), who's been with the group since day one. Benny is living proof that Men's Sheds aren't just for the retired—and he's keen to see more younger men head to their local Shed and check it out.***

"I've been working part-time as a gardening assistant for nearly eight years now and absolutely love it," Benny says. "The flexible hours give me plenty of spare time, and when I saw on Facebook that there were talks about starting a Men's Shed on Westray, I jumped at the chance."

Benny attended the very first public meeting and hasn't looked back since. "I've been involved since the beginning. I go along twice a week—to socialise and learn new skills. I may be the youngest member, but I've learned so much from the others working side by side."

From woodworking to storytelling, Benny has soaked up the knowledge shared by his fellow Sheddies. "I've helped with loads of community projects—like building three-tier

planters and bird houses. The guys are always full of great stories and practical advice."

And the impact? "It's done wonders for my health and wellbeing," he adds. "The Shed's just a short walk from my house, or I catch a lift from one of the other lads. Some members come mainly for the banter and endless cups of tea and biscuits—we have a great time putting the world to rights."

Recently, SMSA Development Officer Tim Green popped by for a visit—even while on annual leave, the SMSA team members are always thinking about Sheds! Inspired by Benny's story, Tim passed it on to the SMSA team, and not long after, Benny was being interviewed by SMSA Communications & PR Officer Michelle Wibrew.

"I was chuffed to be asked," Benny says. "It's so important that we spread the intergenerational message that Men's Sheds are for all men aged 18 and over."

Benny is passionate about challenging outdated ideas. "There's

this myth that Sheds are only for older retired guys who like woodworking—but that couldn't be further from the truth. It's about community, connection, learning, and wellbeing. Everyone can benefit."

Looking ahead, Benny and the Westray crew are excited about the future. "We're currently exploring opportunities and hope to secure a permanent home for the Shed soon."

"That will be a real game-changer for us, helping us reach even more men across the island—especially the younger generation."

Men's Sheds are about creating a safe and welcoming space for all men—aged 18 and up—to meet, share, learn, and support one another. Benny's message is clear: ***"We need more young men to step through the Shed doors. The Shed has improved my life, and it could improve yours too."***

**Pictured below (left to right):** Mick, Benny, Tim, Alex, Geordie, Jim and Tom (Steve behind the camera).





## Stewarton Community Shed creates new town sign honouring local heritage

*Stewarton Community Shed is making its mark—literally—by creating a new town sign that now stands proudly in the heart of the town centre. It's a significant achievement for the group, which only launched a few months ago but is already stitching itself into the fabric of its community.*

The striking new sign, located at the crossroads in the town centre, is the first major project completed by the newly-established East Ayrshire Shed.

Its unveiling marked a proud moment for the community and a celebration of the town's rich heritage. Crafted with care and collaboration, the sign was developed with support from Stewarton Academy's technical department, who contributed to the design of the town's coat of arms and the intricate lettering.

Prominently featured on the sign is Stewarton's historic motto, "Knit Weel", alongside the year 1590—commemorating the founding of the town's bonnet-making trade, a cornerstone of its identity.

Town and village signs like this one serve as visual emblems of local culture, history, and pride. For Stewarton, this new addition is more than just a marker—it's a symbol of community spirit and shared legacy.

The Stewarton Community Shed is already making a big impact—the town sign is just the beginning of a series of community-driven projects aimed at enhancing local spaces and fostering connections.

The Shed is part of the Thrive Stewarton initiative, a project of John Knox Parish Church. Thrive Stewarton offers a range of activities designed to support the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of the community.

In addition to the town sign, the Shed has also created a heritage display panel for John Knox Parish Church in celebration of its bicentenary.

The panel (pictured bottom right) was produced under the guidance of Bill Beaton, with contributions from Shed member Tom Anderson, and was unveiled by Ian Campbell and Rev. Gavin Niven of the church.

The Stewarton Community Shed is open on Thursdays from 10am to 1pm, and on the first Saturday of each month from 9am to noon.



"This project is a great example of what can be achieved when people come together with a shared purpose," said Pete Anderson, Project Worker for Thrive Stewarton.

"It's just the beginning of what we hope will be a long and inspiring journey for the Shed and the wider community."





Just another day at the Shed — and another skill added to the CV: boat building!

## Never mind the Tall Ships—the Bridge of Don Sheddars have delivered a pirate ship adventure!

*Forget the Tall Ships – the real magic set sail at The Rocking Horse Nursery in Aberdeen, thanks to the creativity, craftsmanship and community spirit of the [Bridge of Don and District Sheddars](#).*

After weeks of dedicated work, the Men's Shed proudly delivered a handcrafted pirate ship, designed especially for the children of the nursery.

Made with care, imagination, and a lot of elbow grease—this fantastic play structure is already inspiring young imaginations and setting the scene for countless adventures on the high seas.

This project is a shining example of what Men's Sheds are all about: men coming together to share skills, connect with others, and give back to their local communities. From the first plank of wood to the final coat of paint, every stage of the build was infused with purpose and teamwork.

"We're delighted to have been part of something that brings so much joy to the children," said Eric Bisset from the Shed. "There's something really special about seeing them climb aboard and instantly turn into little pirates. It makes all the effort worthwhile."

The Rocking Horse Nursery team was equally thrilled. "The children are absolutely over the moon. This is so much more than just a play structure – it's a gift of imagination and fun that they'll enjoy for many years to come."

Huge thanks go out to all the men involved in this brilliant project. Your ship has officially come in – and it's docked right in the hearts of your local community.







## Howard Bell's Boot Bird Boxes: From old welly to nesting wonderland

*Navy veteran and St Andrews Shedder Howard Bell has spent the last 20 years turning his quirky ideas into functional creations. While most people might see a worn-out old boot destined for the bin, Howard sees a cosy home just waiting to take shape.*

Following his retirement, Howard began making bird boxes with his late wife, selling them at car boot sales and community events. "It was a great success," he recalls.

Later, he created 40 bird houses for his wife's celebration of life reception, all of which were snapped up with the proceeds going to charity.

Howard advises buyers to time things carefully so birds roost just before winter, ensuring they return the following spring to nest.

"Every single one I have sold, I get messages saying, 'We have occupants!'" he says with a smile. After hearing about the St Andrews

Men's Shed following his wife's passing, Howard now makes bird boxes at the Shed and lets his creativity flow. One recent design is using vertical log edging (pictured with Howard left). The boxes are sold through Facebook Marketplace to raise funds toward Shed running costs and for materials like screws and varnish to make more boxes.

Howard's mission goes way beyond fundraising. He gives old footwear — wellies, trainers, and other discarded boots—a second life as unique bird homes. Each boot is carefully treated to withstand the elements, ensuring a safe, long-lasting refuge. "I started with one or two boots just for fun," he says, "and now I have a collection of different designs. It's amazing to see birds take to them—they really do love them."

From tiny wrens to adventurous sparrows, Howard's creations provide shelter and stand as a perfect example of creativity, sustainability, and a love for nature all rolled into one. In a world that often throws things away too quickly, his bird boxes inspire others to look at everyday items in new ways, finding joy in repurposing and giving them a new purpose.



## Dunoon Community Shed crafts historic display for Kilmun Mausoleum

*Dunoon Community Shed recently took on a meaningful commission when they were approached by [Historic Kilmun](#) to design and build a mobile information display to help visitors learn more about the Kilmun Mausoleum and its rich history.*

Shed Secretary Geoff Evans explains: "Last autumn, our woodwork team was approached by Historic Kilmun with a unique challenge: could we craft a mobile display unit using reclaimed materials from

the church buildings, including parts of old pews and a church door? How could we say no!"

The result, completed earlier this year, is a beautiful bespoke stand created by Shed member John Ferrie (pictured right), made entirely from over 100-year-old oak. As the project progressed, the team creatively worked with increasingly smaller offcuts, determined to use only the original church timber to complete the project.

The final touches—sanding, varnishing, and banner installation—were completed in collaboration with Bob Reid of Historic Kilmun, who also sourced and designed the informational panels.





# PSA Testing and Men's Sheds

**Men's Sheds across Scotland are a safe space for men to talk about their health. By sharing information about prostate health and Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA), Sheds could make a real difference.**

Encouraging our fellow Shedders to talk to their GP to discuss having a PSA test, swap experiences, or simply have an honest chat... could save lives.

The Shed movement is about more than making things with your hands — it's about making sure men don't face challenges alone. Helping spread awareness of prostate disease, prostate cancer and PSA testing is just another way Sheds can keep looking out for each other.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer among men in Scotland—1 in 10 men in Scotland may develop prostate cancer—however, when detected early, it is also one of the most treatable. And that's why Prostate Scotland works tirelessly to raise awareness and improve understanding, bust some of the myths that surround prostate disease and prostate cancer, and make more men and their families aware of PSA testing.

Many men with early prostate cancer don't experience any symptoms. This can mean that, for some men, their prostate cancer can go unnoticed until it is more advanced. PSA tests can help pick up changes earlier, giving men a better chance of effective treatment.

## What is PSA testing?

One of the key tools in early detection, the PSA blood test, is a simple blood test that can be used as a guide to finding any disease in the prostate. It will measure your PSA level which can be checked in the future to see if the level has gone up i.e. give a baseline. If prostate cancer is diagnosed early then there are several curative treatments available.

## Raising awareness of PSA testing

Prostate Scotland and the SMSA encourage men — particularly those aged 50+, and men who have an increased risk of prostate cancer such as a brother or father having or having had prostate cancer or men from an African Caribbean background— to speak to their GP about PSA testing.

Through community outreach, awareness campaigns, and partnerships with health services, Prostate Scotland has provided men and their families with the information, so they are more knowledgeable and supported when asking their GP for a PSA test. In some areas, Men's Sheds have also played a role in helping to spread the word, giving men the confidence to talk openly about their health and seek advice.

## What men need to know

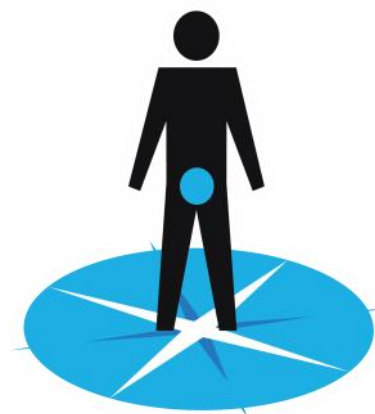
- A PSA test is quick and straightforward
- A raised PSA level does not automatically mean prostate cancer, but it does mean further checks may be useful
- The test can be a valuable first step in protecting long-term health
- Guidance issued to GPs in the Prostate Cancer Risk Management Programmes states that "The PSA test is available free to any man aged 50 and over who requests it"

## Breaking the Silence

Let's make sure more men across Scotland feel informed, supported, and empowered when it comes to their prostate health! For more information about PSA testing and prostate health, please visit the [Prostate Scotland website](https://prostatescotland.org.uk) and read ['The PSA Test—Get the Knowledge' leaflet](#).

To arrange a Prostate Scotland talk for your Shed, please call 0131 603 8660 or email [info@prostatescotland.org.uk](mailto:info@prostatescotland.org.uk).

To book a [Shed-Wise](#) session for your Shedders through the SMSA, please contact your [regional Development Officer](#).





# OPPORTUNITIES

## Small Steps, Big Impact: Climate Week North East 2025 *From Envirolution Aberdeen to Plenty? Festival – Two Weeks of Fun, Learning, and Caring for Our Planet!*

Mark your calendars! From Saturday, 20th September to Sunday, 5th October 2025, [Climate Week North East \(CWNE\)](#) returns for its 11th year—this time aligning with the [Scottish Climate Week](#) and other nationwide climate events.

Over two action-packed weeks, communities across **Aberdeen City** and **Aberdeenshire** will come together for a diverse lineup of climate-conscious events—from beach cleans and nature walks to repair cafes, workshops, guided tours, hands-on learning sessions, and discussions.

This year's theme, “**small steps, big impact**” reminds us that meaningful environmental change starts with the everyday choices we make.

Climate Week North East isn't just about one type of activity, rather it's a celebration of diverse, inclusive ways to take climate action. Events are designed to appeal to all ages, backgrounds, and levels of experience, showing that climate-friendly actions can be fun, creative, and accessible to everyone and that small, meaningful actions make a positive impact on our environment in ways that suit your interests and lifestyle.

Whether you're new to climate action, or someone with a curious mind or a seasoned environment enthusiast looking to connect with their community, there's something for everyone to get involved with.

Speaking about the 11th CWNE, Alison Stuart, CEO of NESCAN Hub and co-founder of CWNE said: “From hosting an event to simply showing up and getting involved, your participation helps us move closer to the ambitious climate targets we urgently need to meet. Local action adds up to global

impact, and together, we can turn momentum into meaningful progress in a fun and enthusiastic way possible through CWNE25”.

Across the two-week programme, you'll find events grouped around themes such as outdoor fun & tours, arts & crafts, family-friendly activities, performing arts & films, sustainability & lifestyle talks and workshops.

### Opening Day: Envirolution Aberdeen

A passionate partnership that includes Bob Walley, the co-founder of Envirolution UK, NESCAN Hub, Aberdeen City Council, CFINE, Aberdeen Climate Action, SHMU, Granite City Good Food, Action for a Fairer World, and the University of Aberdeen, has come together to announce the return of [Envirolution Aberdeen](#) in Seaton Park.

This vibrant event will be the opening of CWNE on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September with a mix of interactive stalls, live performances, workshops, games, food and drink, and a feel-good atmosphere that welcomes all ages.

Having first begun in Manchester back in 2009 and after making its Aberdeen debut last year, this event proved to be a huge hit among all! We were blessed with sunshine, the air was filled with music, and the park was buzzing with people from across the city and shire. Bob Walley, co-founder of Envirolution UK, called bringing Envirolution to the North East “incredibly exciting” and this year, it's set to be even better.

If you're wondering what you might have missed in the previous year or want a taste of the atmosphere before you decide, [watch the highlights from Envirolution Aberdeen 2024](#). From sun-soaked park picnics with loved ones and furry friends, to live music, hands-on workshops, and kids creating art in eco-friendly ways, you'll feel the energy that filled Seaton Park.

*Envirolution is proudly volunteer-supported, and we'd love to welcome anyone who'd like to get involved. If you're interested in gifting their time, skills and expertise, come and be part of making this celebration happen at Seaton Park. Email: [lauren@nescan.org](mailto:lauren@nescan.org).*

### Closing Celebration: Plenty? Festival

To close Climate Week North East 2025, [the Barn](#) will present their annual Plenty? Festival, a creative, community-focused weekend exploring the theme of ‘degrowth’.

The weekend festival includes a screening of the documentary film, *Ash Rise: Woodland to Workshop* on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October, a *Day of Discourse* on Saturday 4th and a *Family-Friendly day* on Sunday 5th October.

The weekend will bring together facilitated talks and discussions, creative hands-on activities, information stations, engaging experiences with experts and apple pressing.

The full line up will be announced soon, and we look forward to seeing how this year's event will inspire and connect people of all ages. Keep an eye on [the Barn](#) website for the official announcement and full details on the programme.

### Why you should join in

These two weeks are all about action, connection, and community spirit and all events are designed to be welcoming, inclusive, and, most importantly, fun.

So, grab your friends, family, neighbours and fellow Sheddars, and get involved! Whether you're volunteering at a workshop, joining a guided tour, or just stopping by for a sunny family stroll, your presence matters!



**NESCAN** HUB



**envirolution**  
aberdeen







**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.*

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***In Scotland, For Scotland***

