

THE SCOTTISH SHEDDER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SMSA

Edition 20 | March 2021



SMSA
MANIFESTO

REOPENING
GUIDANCE
for Sheds

NEW
Gardening
Tips & Advice
Feature

Men's Sheds
as an
ALTERNATIVE
HEALTHCARE
ROUTE?



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SMSA manifesto launch

The Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) has launched its first-ever **manifesto**, ahead of the Scottish Parliament Elections 2021, calling on politicians to support men's health and wellbeing through Scottish Men's Sheds.

The Association, which is trailblazing the Men's Sheds Movement in Scotland, recommends five key actions for politicians, invested groups and the general public as a whole to support Men's Sheds and fully recognise the wealth of health and wellbeing benefits for men over the age of 18.

SMSA's vision is that every man in Scotland will, one day, have access to—and the opportunity to attend—their local Men's Shed if they choose to do so. Jason Schroeder, SMSA Executive Officer, said: "SMSA is launching this manifesto at just the right time. Sheds will be needed more than ever in post-COVID-19 recovery and it is vital to expand the SMSA and its support mechanism in line with the growth of the Movement to support Sheds across Scotland now and in the years to come.

"Investment and support to lead change is required to underpin the ongoing creation of this health by stealth and voluntary social wellbeing pathway for men. SMSA is also recommending that localised support across the Shed network is embedded; a start-up and development fund for Sheds is implemented; a focused national awareness campaign is delivered; and the reach to the Armed Forces and Veterans community and Blue Light services is improved on."

SMSA pledges to continue making a real difference by empowering thousands of men (our sons, brothers, fathers, uncles and grandfathers) and their communities - over the coming years - to play their part in a system change towards a wellbeing economy.

View the manifesto at www.scottishmsa.org.uk



Revised Reopening Guidance for Sheds

Following the 'Reopening Guidance for Men's Sheds in Scotland' consultation with Shed members and our partner organisations, SMSA is now releasing the revised version.

SMSA is indebted to the organisations—including SMSA Shed Members, Age Scotland, Healthy Working Lives, Public Health Scotland, Scottish Community Development Centre and Scottish Government—that took the time to review the documents and provide us with feedback.

On the 26th April 2021, Scotland will return to the levels system (see right)

and it is hoped that Sheds will be able to re-open their doors—in line with SMSA guidance—and these discussions need to now be taking place within your individual committees as to whether or not your Shed is in a position to re-open to some extent.

The guidance provides advice and examples for Sheds on steps and safety measures to put in place prior to opening their doors again when the time is right. The documents are intended for guidance only and were developed by the Association to attempt to cover all types of Men's Sheds across Scotland and aid the individual decision-making process for each Shed Committee.

SMSA will regularly review the guidance and advise Sheds of any changes. The guidance is now available in the SMSA online resource library (member log-in required) at:

www.scottishmsa.org.uk/shed-manual-resources/shed-resource-reopening-guidance-for-sheds

Lockdown easing in Scotland: Key dates

-  **26 March**
Communal worship allowed for up to 50 people
-  **2 April**
Current stay at home advice changes to stay local
-  **5 April**
12 to 17-year-olds can play contact sports outdoors
Phased return for universities and colleges
Hairdressers can reopen
Garden centres and some other non-essential retail can reopen
Click and collect resumes
-  **19 April**
All pupils expected to be back full time after Easter holidays
-  **26 April**
Return to levels system
Travel allowed within mainland Scotland
People shielding can return to work or education
Non-essential retail, pubs and restaurants to reopen
Gyms, swimming pools and other leisure activities resume
-  **17 May**
Four people from two households can meet indoors
Adults can play contact sports outdoors
Cinemas and bingo halls can reopen

Source: Scottish government



The Scottish Shedder promotes news from Men's Sheds across Scotland to showcase their successes (and challenges) in addition to highlighting funding opportunities, DIY projects, recipes and much more. Each issue is sent digitally to over 2,400 Individual Member subscribers.

We want to hear all about your Shed, its latest developments and exciting projects and are therefore asking for your contributions for the next issue by Friday 30th April 2021. We urge you to maximise the potential to raise the profile of your Shed and the Men's Sheds Movement in Scotland. Email Michelle at comms@scottishmsa.org.uk

TALKING SHEDS

by Jason Schroeder

Well, here we are with the first quarter of the year gone in a blink. Daffodils are shooting up and seeds are being planted in greenhouses and Sheds across the country. For us at the SMSA, it has been a very busy and successful first quarter as we start seeing the fruits of our labour over winter starting to pay off.

What with Bruce on our newly designed front cover you might be thinking this is a Gardening Scotland magazine. However, let me assure you all that it is definitely all about Sheds and the way forward and yes, we are moving forward.

We have been working for many years now with Glasgow Caledonian University on Scottish Men's Sheds research and last week another paper was prestigiously accepted and published in an internationally-acclaimed [health journal](#) (see [page 5](#)). This is invaluable for the Movement as we now have academic proof of the health benefits of Scottish Men's Sheds. This gives local and national funders the confidence to invest in us.

We have just launched our first ever [manifesto](#) (see [page 2](#)) which has five actions we will work towards and for this to succeed it will require substantial investment and support on many levels. To garner this level of support requires awareness of the grassroots movement (i.e. the Sheds), our work to promote it nationally and it was great to see this in the second [Scottish Parliamentary debate](#) (see [page 5](#)) held on Men's Sheds recently.

You might not realise but to build a long-lasting and effective legacy, which is strong in its roots and well-grounded, takes a multi-layered approach.

You need to stay focused on your local Shed. It is still

difficult to start and maintain a Shed—although a lot simpler compared to ten years ago—but in my opinion, there are still way too many hoops to jump through. So, the SMSA is doing this background preparation work and supporting you at the same time.

Without you, there is no Shed legacy to be had, experienced or left for those present and the future generations who desperately need them more than ever in a post-COVID world.

So, to opening the Sheds again—hooray, is it time? SMSA has just finished the consultation on the COVID-19 Reopening Shed Guidance and thank everyone that took part in that.

Your feedback and wisdom is greatly appreciated and we have now released the [revised version](#) (see [page 2](#)).

In line with that guidance, we also still have some Shed Emergency Funding available so please apply via the [SMSA website](#).

SMSA has also pioneered another new support mechanism to encourage Sheddors back into their Sheds safely and increase their confidence to re-engage with the world.

This simple but highly effective device ([Pathfindr Safe Distancing Assistant](#)) is available to your Shed through us and made possible thanks to the successful grant (£60,000 funding) we applied for through the Scottish Government. Check out the case study we did with the manufacturer (Pathfindr) on [page 6](#).

To date, we have had 38 Sheds apply and this—with a copy of the Reopening Guidance—is to be posted out now so Shed preparations can be started. If your Shed is not on this list overleaf then you need to be. The devices are FREE to SMSA Shed Members—[join today if you are not already a member](#)—and [get in your application](#).

Continued over the page...



134

SMSA SHED MEMBERS

2,463

SMSA INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS



131

OPEN SHEDS



55

SHEDS IN DEVELOPMENT



32

LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS



UPDATE YOUR DETAILS WITH THE SMSA



New email address?



Moved house?



Not sure if you are a member or not?

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

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

TALKING SHEDS

by Jason Schroeder

...Continued from previous page

Pathfindr devices have been requested from the following Sheds:

1. Aboyne and Mid-Deeside Men's Shed
2. Arbroath Men's Shed
3. Auchterarder & District Men's Shed
4. Aultbea Men's Shed
5. Barrhead Men's Shed
6. Biggar and District Men's Shed
7. Black Isle Men's Shed
8. Broadford & Strath Men's Shed
9. Broughty Ferry and District Men's Shed
10. Carluke Men's Shed
11. Carnoustie and Monifieth Men's Shed
12. Comrie & District Men's Shed
13. Culter & District Men's Shed
14. Dalbeattie Men's Shed
15. Dingwall Men's Shed
16. Ellon Men's Shed
17. Fochabers Men's Shed
18. Forres & District Men's Shed
19. Fort William Men's Shed
20. Galashiels Men's Shed
21. Harbourside Men's Shed
22. Hawick Men's Shed
23. Inverclyde Shed
24. Kennoway Community Shed
25. Kirkmuirhill & Blackwood Men's Shed
26. Men's Shed Govan
27. Mintlaw and District Men's Shed
28. Musselburgh Men's Shed
29. Paisley Men's Shed
30. Peebles and District Men's Shed
31. Peterhead and District Men's Shed
32. Rhins Men's Shed
33. Rosyth Men's Shed
34. Selkirk Community Shed
35. Stonehouse Men's Shed
36. The Men Of Leith Men's Shed
37. The Shed @Bayview Men's Shed
38. Westhill & District Men's Shed

SMSA welcomes three new Shed Members—Maryburgh Men's Shed (see [page 14](#)), Cumnock Men's Shed and Houston and Killellan Kirk Men's Shed (see [page 15](#)). Great to have you on board and for starting Sheds in your area during lockdown. Pioneering spirits in the face of adversity—that's a Scottish Shedder right there.

Various Sheds have been in touch asking us if their members that have had their vaccinations can start meeting with other people that have also been vaccinated in their Shed. The short answer is no.

Physical distancing and strict safety measures must still be adhered to. It is my present understanding that if you have had the vaccine, you can still have COVID-19 without showing symptoms, pass it on and/or get it. It is still too soon to relax any measures in any way and SMSA is awaiting official guidance on this issue and will keep you updated if anything changes.

Last but not least, I want to welcome our new Administrator Sue Salter on board the good ship SMSA (see [page 5](#)). We have been without an Administrator since May last year and I have done my best to wrestle with the multi-armed octopus which is this position.

I am so relieved that she has joined us and is not only learning the ropes very fast and efficiently but getting this side of the operation and our new streamlined protocols in place.

Anything to do with your Shed membership and individual memberships please do introduce yourself to Sue.

I am looking forward to seeing you, at a distance, in a Shed near you very soon when you choose to open.

Jason
SMSA Executive Officer




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Tom Kennedy of Carluke Men's Shed:

"Our Shed has had an extremely positive experience with Greenwood Moreland. Elaine has been extremely helpful and following our discussions, our Shed is delighted to have now received a significantly reduced premium and saved money on this year's insurance."

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Sue Salter
SMSA Administrator

Welcome to the team, Sue!

The Scottish Men's Sheds Association is delighted to welcome [Sue Salter](#) as our new Administrator. Sue has over 20 years' experience in finance and administrative management and has worked in banking, education and the third sector.

Sue will provide office support to the SMSA team vital to the smooth-running of the Association and is a friendly first point of contact for all of our members' enquiries. Sue will also be responsible for maintaining the SMSA database and committed to keeping the wealth of data on the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement as up-to-date as it can possibly be.

Sue said: "I am delighted to join the SMSA team and look forward to making connections with our Scottish Sheds over the upcoming months. In the meantime, if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch."

Sue can be contacted on 07465 202834 or emailed at admin@scottishmsa.org.uk

Men's Sheds as an alternative healthcare route? A qualitative study of the impact of Men's Sheds on user's health improvement behaviours



Glasgow Caledonian University's latest paper from the three-year [Sheds for Sustainable Development Project](#) has been published by the Bio-Medical Central (BMC) Public Health on the 20th March 2021 and is available on their website at:

<https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-021-10585-3>

As men's health is an underrepresented area of policy and practice, there have been calls for more 'male-friendly' approaches to get men to think about and look after their health. While Men's Sheds are recognised for the health and wellbeing impacts they can bring to their users, less is known about the effects that Sheds can have on men's behaviours and attitudes towards their health.

While Sheds aren't formal healthcare providers, this paper outlines the ways that Sheds encourage men to look after their health and wellbeing in both obvious and non-obvious ways in an alternative informal and supportive 'male-friendly' environment. For example, the ways that Shed activities can provide a distraction from illness or adversity, how men can become educated on aspects of male health and how the support that Sheddors receive can make them feel better about their health situations.

For more information about the GCU [Sheds for Sustainable Development Project](#) (funded by The National Lottery Community Fund), please contact Dani at Danielle.kelly@gcu.ac.uk

Scottish Men's Sheds Movement debated in Scottish Parliament

On Thursday 18th February 2021 at 5.05pm, the Scottish Parliament debated on the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement during Members' Business led by Maurice Corry MSP alongside four-minute speeches from Kenneth Gibson MSP, Rona McKay MSP, Stuart McMillan MSP and Christine Grahame MSP. The debate was concluded by Aileen Campbell MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government.

The debate is in reference to the 'Scotland's Men's Sheds Movement' motion (S5M-23991) lodged by Maurice Corry MSP on the 27th January 2021.

If you missed it, you can view the full 17-minute debate on the SMSA website at www.scottishmsa.org.uk/scottish-mens-sheds-movement-debated-in-scottish-parliament



How a wearable technology is helping Scottish Men's Sheds to tackle social isolation between men during COVID-19

Safe distancing technology supporting an essential nation-wide community initiative, Men's Sheds, enabling it to continue providing vital health and wellbeing support to its members during the Coronavirus pandemic

The Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) is a charitable organisation that empowers men to engage with each other in a healthy way by encouraging its members to voluntarily create 'Men's Sheds' in their local communities across Scotland. The 'Men's Shed' concept, which began in Australia, consists of a communal space where its members (known as 'Shedders') can pursue practical skills and interests whilst also offering social connections and a sense of purpose.

This now-thriving movement in Scotland – with 190+ Shed groups and approximately 10,000 Shedders - is changing lives by offering men an inclusive space for them to come together and socialise, share skills and knowledge and most importantly, have fun.

Following the introduction of a COVID-19 tier system in October, the charity began a trial of the Pathfindr Safe Distancing Assistant with ten member Sheds to see if their members could safely resume activities whilst also giving individuals peace of mind and control over their own safety.

The Challenge

COVID-19 safety measures go against the ethos of Sheds and its 'shoulder to shoulder' approach. The movement, reliant on close interaction, was hit hard when social distancing restrictions were put in place and as a result isolation and loneliness is now at its peak.

In March 2020 when the first lockdown was announced, all Sheds temporarily closed their doors. While some have faced the threat of permanent closure, Sheds are also experiencing cuts in funding and a huge reduction in income generation due to being unable to fundraise as a result of the strict social distancing guidelines in place.

As Scotland entered a tier system in October 2020, some Sheds made the decision to reopen their doors to a certain extent to allow for groups to meet in small numbers – adhering to physical distancing and hygiene standards – for social reconnection. For them to do so, the SMSA needed to introduce safety measures that would encourage members to continue using their local Shed, while also giving them the confidence to safely take control of physical distancing without jeopardising the important relationships formed within the Sheds.

How?

When Scotland entered tier 4 in October, the SMSA approached Pathfindr to find out more about its Safe Distancing Assistant (SDA) devices – a small wearable device that emits a short audible alert or vibration when users come too close to one another.

The SMSA began a trial with 80 devices being split between ten Scottish Men's Sheds to determine their effectiveness in a social and workshop setting. Used by the Sheds during morning and afternoon sessions (e.g. workshop projects, Board business, a social meet up, Shed maintenance etc) and in indoor and outdoor scenarios - the devices were configured to a safe distance of two metres and provided to members on arrival.

Using ultra-wideband, low power technology (3.5ghz radio TX frequency), the devices offer a full 360-degree field of detection, allowing Shed members to check and correct their distance and continue socialising safely. The detection field can also be easily reconfigured, enabling them to continue complying with changing guidance around physical distancing.

Following the successful trial, the SMSA then applied for and received additional funding from the Scottish Government and Scottish Community Alliance to roll out Pathfindr devices to all 188 Sheds across Scotland. While currently facing a nationwide lockdown, wider implementation is expected to take place in the coming weeks and months once the country enters back into a tier system and Sheds can reopen.

Results

By implementing Pathfindr devices into SMSA's wider COVID-recovery plan, the Association and Scottish Sheds can now continue their vital work of offering men support during an especially difficult time. Many Shedders have revealed that the devices have given them the confidence to attend their Shed by removing the need to have potentially awkward conversations around proximity with their fellow Shedders. Members are encouraged to see the SMSA taking proactive steps to limit the risk of infection and give them the tools to socially reconnect.

Jason Schroeder, SMSA Executive Officer, said: "The physical and mental wellbeing of our Scottish Shedders is our top priority – especially as the pandemic has increased the isolation and anxiety being felt by many. We know that talking about mental health and other concerns is still heavily stigmatised. As such, Sheds provide an essential service for those that may have previously struggled to socialise in a way they feel comfortable with and so it was important that we explored our options and are delighted to have found a way for Sheds to continue operating safely, as best as they can, in light of the pandemic."



"Pathfindr's Safe Distancing Assistants fit well into the mix of measures we have recommended for Sheds across Scotland, giving Sheds back the control and additional peace of mind when it comes to their members' safety. It has been extremely beneficial having a solution to what could be an uncomfortable interaction if someone does accidentally get too close. Shedders particularly appreciate that they do not need to worry about asking people to move away from them, they can simply let the devices do the talking for them."

To order FREE Pathfindr devices for your Shed, please [click here](#).

Come and be part of Scotland's national reuse, repair and recycling charity

The Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) has signed up as a member of the Community Resources Network Scotland (CRNS), has your Shed?

CRNS's vision is for a future where there is no waste, only resources. Where people, communities and the environment are valued and respected. The charity is passionate about working together to deliver a circular economy in Scotland and it wants to see the environmental, social, community and economic changes that will come as people alter the way they consume their resources. Put simply, CRNS believes in "People, Planet & Place".



Matt Lewis, Membership and Projects Officer at CRNS, said: "As the national membership body for the community reuse and recycling sector in Scotland, we give our 150+ members a voice. We have a few Men's Sheds that have joined the Network but would love to welcome more. The reuse, repair and recycling activities that are already taking place in Scottish Men's Sheds is phenomenal and fits so well within the wider circular economy agenda."

Join the Community Resources Network Scotland to:

CONNECT & LEARN

- ⇒ Come to a great range of events throughout the year designed to help you connect with others and stay informed
- ⇒ Free access to regional forums and technical seminars
- ⇒ Discounted member-only prices at the CRNS annual conference
- ⇒ Webinar events to support remote members
- ⇒ Access to other network and selected partner events

GROW

- ⇒ Get access to resources to help grow your organisation and deliver on your vision
- ⇒ Reuse donation opportunities
- ⇒ Reuse donations directly from the public via the new CRNS website
- ⇒ Access to Community Learning Exchange and Accelerator Funding Programmes

HAVE A VOICE

- ⇒ As your membership body, CRNS will represent you and advocate on your behalf at a local, national and international level
- ⇒ Access to CRNS membership survey, infographic and impact report which highlights the work of the sector
- ⇒ Support to build partnerships with local authorities across Scotland
- ⇒ Represent the sector with Scottish Government, actively contributing to policy development
- ⇒ Advocacy at EU level via membership of the RREUSE network

DEVELOP

- ⇒ Get support for your organisation and connect with the great work happening across Scotland
- ⇒ Development support by phone, email or video conference
- ⇒ Support visits to your project
- ⇒ Member to member questions and peer to peer support
- ⇒ Introductions to other stakeholders and influencers

COMMUNICATE

- ⇒ Build your organisation's profile and stay up to date
- ⇒ Annual virtual membership pack (including certificate, sticker, digital profile)
- ⇒ A dedicated webpage for your organisation on the CRNS website
- ⇒ CRNS will share your key social media conversations
- ⇒ Exclusive member-only funding and policy updates

INTERESTED?

Membership for 2021 is completely free for any charity or social enterprise with an annual income of less than £100k and the application process is very easy; just complete the simple form on the [CRNS website](https://www.crns.org.uk) to get your application started and they will be in touch after that.

If you have any queries, please email the [CRNS team](mailto:info@crns.org.uk).



Introducing 12 Guitars!

As we start approaching a time when lockdown will hopefully be easing soon and we start to consider re-opening our Shed doors once again, you might be keen to take a look at this social enterprise that caught our eye.

12 Guitars—currently based in Govan, Glasgow and formed by Gerry Thorogood and Steve Plummer in April 2019—is broadening its focus and reaching out across Scotland with an ambitious plan to help people in our society that need a musical boost!

12 Guitars receives donated guitars from a variety of sources, recycles/upcycles them and donates them to people who could not otherwise have access to a guitar or perhaps don't have the resources to buy a guitar. They then provide guitar tuition both physically and online and also have some workshop facilities to service, repair and restring donated guitars.

SMSA has been liaising with the management team at 12 Guitars and they have some ambitious plans afoot and we wonder if there could be synergy between our two organisations? SMSA and 12 Guitars are keen to hear from Sheds, Shedders and Movement supporters if there is an interest to optimise the musical talent across the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement.

Ken Morton, Director of 12 Guitars, said: "We are very excited about potentially working with the SMSA and Shedders across Scotland. We have many exciting plans in the pipeline including online 'gig nights' that could be broadcast to the Sheds. We are interested to hear if there is an interest in guitars, guitar maintenance, repairing guitars and even forming Shed bands—the possibilities of this partnership are endless."

To give you an idea of the "Shed Bands" live event idea and concept, here is an article of a series of events that took place a few years ago, around the world, called "Weekend Warriors" where bands were formed and performed for fun and to "soft" audiences (friends and families mainly) at www.australianmusician.com.au/weekend-warriors-a-firsthand-account and a video to show how the idea works in general at www.youtube.com/watch?v=OFbIML3AcbA



12 Guitars
enabling young musicians

Interested?

SMSA and 12 Guitars are keen to hear your thoughts on this potential opportunity to learn new skills, help your communities through music and provide fun challenging musical events.

Please complete the online questionnaire at the link below to let us know your thoughts on this potential exciting collaboration. **Please respond by Friday 9th April 2021.**

Complete the questionnaire online at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/12Guitars

For more information on 12 Guitars, check out their website at www.12guitars.org, follow them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/12GuitarsRock and watch a short clip of them in action on You Tube at <https://youtu.be/K7wvRDu6i88>



Get your Shed cartie ready for a hurl at this year's Royal Deeside Motor Show Cartie Race!

The SMSA has partnered up with The Royal Deeside Cartie Race 2021! The event—which will take place on Saturday 17th & Sunday 18th July 2021 on the Kincardine Castle drive as part of the Royal Deeside Motor Show—consists of teams that have built and race their own push-along racing carts.

Jason Schroeder, SMSA Executive Officer, said: “Not only will the SMSA have a presence and a stall at this two-day event, but we are also asking Sheds across Scotland to join us and enter their own teams for this fun family event. Sheds can enter for the race on the Saturday or the Sunday and who better to design and build the winning cartie than our Scottish Shedders!

“This year, the theme for entries is Masked Crusaders and the best entry will win a prize. SMSA is also appealing for Sheds local to Deeside and the surrounding area to get involved in the actual build of the race track. If your Shed is interested, [please get in touch](#).

“This is just a bit of fun after a very difficult year and all safety measures and physical distancing will be in place for this outdoor event.

“This is an opportunity for Shedders to get back into the Shed in small numbers—utilising [Pathfind Safe](#)



Distancing Assistant technology—to get back working on fun projects together.”

Stephen Hall from the Scottish Cartie Association said: “Each team will be allocated two runs in order to secure their fastest time. The course follows a route down the drive at speeds of up to 40 mph. The driver will have the option of taking either a short chicane or a jump to test their skills on the Ski Slalom!”

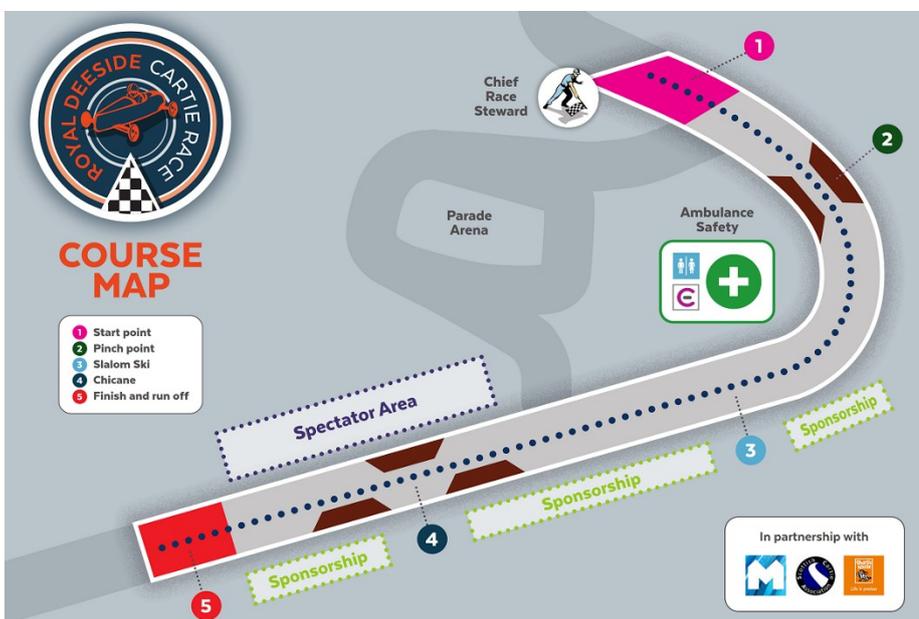
“The event is limited to a maximum of 40 entrants. There is a junior category (driver is aged between 12 and 17 on the date of the race) and an adult category (driver is aged 18 or over on the date of the race).

“The extravaganza will see up to 40 carts going head to head in a time trial challenge. We also aim to help raise funds for Charlie House and for the SMSA.

“Soapbox racing was popularised in America and refers to an unpowered cart which is raced downhill, with gravity being the only form of propulsion. In Scotland, we traditionally call a soap box a ‘Cartie’ or ‘Kert-ie’ in Doric. A grand final will be held at the end of the day, with the top teams from the junior and adult categories going head to head to determine a final winner. Don't forget, you need time to build your cartie, so enter as soon as possible to guarantee your entry for 2021!”

Full entry details, including design regulations and the rules, are available on the website at <https://etiom.co.uk/royal-deeside-motor-show/cartie-race>.

DISCOUNTED ENTRY FEE FOR SHEDS: The entry fee is discounted from £45 to £25 per Shed team (plus £15 per person for event ticket) however SMSA will reimburse the £25 entry fee to all Sheds that race at the event.



SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Secretary Eric Bisset shares Bridge of Don & District Men's Shed's journey over the last five years and how they received the keys to their 'Guardhouse' Shed at the Gordon Barracks in Aberdeen just weeks before lockdown struck.

Eric said: "Our journey began in 2016 when it was thought that our area might benefit from an initiative, very much in its early stages, that was gaining recognition in many countries, not just Scotland. The idea of a Men's Shed in Bridge of Don and District started to become a viable proposition.

"A steering group was set up that initially ran with a three-man committee and later in 2017, held four meetings, where interest levels had grown to around 30 men.

"During this period, we voted to become a constituted group and adopted the standard Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) constitution and also joined as an official [Shed Member](#). Some of our own members also joined the SMSA as [individual members](#) and these platforms provided us with access to the SMSA online resource library and a wealth of content and information on starting-up, developing, running and sustaining a Shed.

"The decision was also taken to become a registered charity and the relevant applications were lodged, with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and

we were accepted as a registered charity ([Scottish Charity No: SCO47762](#)) on the 21st September 2017.

"We now had a Shed Board comprising of our Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, two Charity Trustees, a Shed Technical Development Officer and close to 40 members.

"After various options were explored in our quest for our own premises such as temporary portacabins and industrial units—then dismissed due to operational issues and costs—an offer came in from the North East of Scotland College (NESCol) to lease the Old Guardhouse at the Gordon Barracks in Bridge of Don, Aberdeen for three years. The offer was investigated fully and became the favoured option. After some months of negotiation, a lease was duly signed off.

"So, after a lengthy search of over four years (which appears now to be the norm) we took over the Guardhouse in February 2020 with a meeting area, small kitchen and more importantly, a good sized social area for members to mingle and study project manuals, play dominoes, darts and pool, or unwind with a coffee and good book.

"Men occasionally arrive a bit hesitantly but soon find that the atmosphere is very friendly and welcoming and in the coffee/relaxation area, the world can soon be put to rights with conversations had on topics of general interest to men.

Continued on next page...



SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT (Continued)



...continued from previous page

"Guys like to be in a group and accepted and a coffee break with a bit of banter thrown in, whilst swapping stories and advice, is usually seen as the best part of their visit.

"Outside, our talented members constructed a lean-to woodworking shop, installed electricity, a wood turning lathe, jig saw and other smaller pieces of equipment. They then turned the existing 'garage' into another workshop and equipped it with a metal turning lathe, work benches and various tools, for project work.

"We have tried to kit out the two workshops with most of the equipment, that would be needed to carry out a range of projects, which our men may want to take part in, either for themselves, the community or as items for sale to raise income to assist with rent and utility costs.

"Unfortunately, the COVID-19 lockdown began within a month of us receiving our keys and only a week after our official opening, which has had a dramatic effect on our plans but after the summer with the relaxation of restrictions, we were able to offer a limited form of operation with measures in place.

"We have been accepted into the community and have been very active in assisting local schools, nurseries and community groups with various projects, including a playhouse, go-cart, flower planters etc.

"Over the winter months and with lockdown in force, a small team of us produced festive wares such as Frosty the Snowmen, wooden Christmas trees, baubles and Rudolph the Reindeers—raising much-needed funds to help out with our running costs. Of course, strict hygiene measures and hand sanitisers were in place, along with physical distancing, including a one-way system through the Shed.

"Our Men's Shed is ideally situated in the heart of the Bridge of Don, located right on the main bus routes for the area with good parking and fully accessible by wheelchair ramp at the front entrance. We are always looking for new members to join our vibrant, friendly and well-equipped Shed, so if you have DIY and gardening skills or no skills whatsoever and just want to make some friends and have a blether over a cuppa and 'you' would like to join, then please get in touch."

For more information on Bridge of Don and District Men's Shed, email them at bodanddmensshed@aol.com or follow them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/BridgeofDonMensShed





The Inverclyde Shed scoops £500,000 grant for community workshop

Over half a million pounds, through the Scottish Government's £25 million [Regeneration Capital Grant Fund \(RCGF\)](#), has been secured by The Inverclyde Shed for a 'Make, Grow and Share' project to renovate a run-down old council shed on East Blackhall Street in Greenock.

The Scottish Men's Sheds Association's 'Shed of the Year 2020' is certainly not letting COVID-19 stop them in their tracks as they progress full steam ahead with their ambitious growth and expansion plans for their new community workshop premises—helping secure its future for at least the next 25 years.

The building is the newest addition to their other facilities across Inverclyde including their [Captain Street Shed](#), a [Digital Shed](#) on Kempock Street and their [Shore Street Community Gardens](#) (see 'The Shed Garden' on [page 18](#)).

The RCGF aims to target disadvantaged and remote communities to support regeneration and employment projects and this project will create a purpose-built modern hub accessible to new and existing members/Shedders to share and learn new skills for community benefit and intergeneration working.

Bruce Newlands, Chairperson of The Inverclyde Shed, said: "We are absolutely delighted that our funding bid, with Inverclyde Council, to create something very special in Greenock has been successful.

"The £504,804 project will involve renovating a 4,500 sqft dilapidated building at East Blackhall Street over the next 12 months. The project, when open next January, will provide a long-term sustainable base for The Inverclyde Shed for the next 25 years.

"Through this year's successful projects, 26 empty buildings will be brought back into use. The premises on Greenock's East Blackhall Street will be transformed into

the community workshop thanks to this funding. Men's Sheds are well positioned to be guardians of buildings such as these and the process should really be easier than it currently is. Sheds, as part of the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement, should continue to lobby government to better facilitate the whole Community Asset Transfer (CAT) process."

Communities Secretary Aileen Campbell said: "Together with COSLA, we have invested almost £200 million through this fund since 2014 in support of locally-led regeneration projects which help to build the resilience and wellbeing of communities. I am pleased that a further 26 projects will benefit from the fund as we look to a period of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We have had to lead our lives locally, pulling together more as communities, to see off the many challenges arising from coronavirus. This latest round of investment into local projects continues our ongoing support for vibrant and accessible town centres and communities."

Councillor Jim Clocherty, local authority convener of education and communities, said: "The Inverclyde Shed do a terrific job supporting groups and individuals right across the area. They make a real difference to the lives of the people who are directly involved with but also to those who benefit indirectly through the wonderful work they do in our communities.

"I'm really pleased the council has been able to support The Inverclyde Shed in securing funding that will not only breathe new life into an empty building, but provide a wealth of opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities while helping to improve our towns and villages."

For more information on The Inverclyde Shed, please visit www.inverclydeshed.co.uk or follow them on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, You Tube and LinkedIn).

"Men's Sheds are well positioned to be guardians of buildings such as these and the process should really be easier than it currently is. Sheds, as part of the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement, should continue to lobby government to better facilitate the whole Community Asset Transfer (CAT) process."

National support for Sheds from the Robertson Group

Robertson—one of the largest construction, infrastructure and support services businesses in the UK—is offering its support to Men’s Sheds across Scotland by donating obsolete site materials that can be reused, repurposed and recycled.

Kelly Simms, Group Community Impact Advisor at the Robertson Group, said: “Being socially, economically and environmentally responsible is intertwined in all that we do, and it has been critical to the success Robertson has had to date.

“We look to engage with the communities where we work and to create a lasting legacy. We drive down our waste by following a reduce, reuse, recycle and recovery approach and we are proud to report that 96% of our project waste has been diverted from landfill. We were also awarded platinum status by Zero Waste Scotland’s **Resource Efficiency Pledge** for the steps taken to use energy, water and raw materials more efficiently throughout our operations.

“We are delighted to work with community groups like Men’s Sheds to rehome materials such as pipes, pallets, wood offcuts that are no longer of use onsite and can be reused, repurposed and recycled within the local communities.

“When materials become available within my region (North East of Scotland), I contact the local Men’s Sheds, schools and nurseries to see if the materials can be of use. I also promote these opportunities online. In October 2020, we rehomed approximately 40 pallets to Westhill Men’s Shed—Scotland’s first-ever Men’s Shed—with the materials being used in a variety of their community projects.” We are delighted to be able to offer this support nationally to all of the Men’s Sheds throughout the country.”

Eric Bisset, Secretary of Bridge of Don & District Men’s Shed, said: “The Robertson Group very kindly donated materials to our Shed. The donation included unwanted pallets and timber from the building of The Event Complex Aberdeen (TECA) state-of-the-art building. We used the materials to construct a festive nativity scene for our local church and also built a variety of flower planters (pictured below), as well as fitting out our workshops with some shelves and worktops.”

Robertson has six Community Impact Advisors across Scotland. If your Shed is interested in receiving materials, please email them at community.development@robertson.co.uk and they will put you in touch with the advisor closest to you.

If your Shed receives materials from the Robertson Group as part of this national support, SMSA would love to see your creations. Please send to comms@scottishmsa.org.uk, post pictures to social media and tag [@robertsongroup](https://www.instagram.com/robertsongroup) and [@scottishmsa](https://www.instagram.com/scottishmsa) using the hashtag [#robertsoncommunities](https://www.instagram.com/robertsoncommunities)





**New SMSA
Shed
Member**

Maryburgh Men's Shed celebrates Community Asset Transfer to take over former primary school

Maryburgh Shedders are celebrating the start of a new chapter after receiving the news that they have secured their Community Asset Transfer (CAT) for the former Maryburgh Primary School and grounds this month.

The neglected property, which was surplus to Council requirements, was put up for sale on the open market— attracting interest from the Maryburgh Shed as a potential community asset transfer under the Community Empowerment Act.

The application was approved on the 24th February 2021 by members of The Highland Council's Communities and Place Committee when they agreed to the sale of the former primary school to the Shed for £1.

Councillors agreed to the transfer on the grounds that the local community benefit from the proposed alternative use outweighs the potential capital gain to the local authority of a potential sale.

Andy Barnett, Treasurer of Maryburgh Men's Shed, said: "Maryburgh Men's Shed is a venture created by the Maryburgh Community for the Maryburgh Community. We are all delighted to have reached this agreement with The Highland Council to create our community hub.

"Although our team could not meet properly over the last year, due to COVID-19, we have still been very busy behind the scenes submitting all the necessary paperwork to secure the agreement.

"The building requires some repair work before it will be safe to use as it has lain empty for almost ten years. We intend to redevelop the space for use as a workshop and meeting space - the latter of which we will lease to other groups in the community to support our running costs." The transfer will be made available in late 2021 to early

2022 on conclusion of the former school grounds being used as a compound by The Highland Council for housing construction on the former school site.

Chair of the Communities and Place Committee Cllr Allan Henderson said: "Community Asset Transfers contribute to one of the Council's key strategic priorities which aims to encourage community-led and run services involving more people in local decision making. Successful transfers are great news for our local communities and The Highland Council remains committed even in these difficult COVID times to facilitate applications."

The Shed has raised £765 through JustGiving crowdfunding towards the project. You can support them by making a donation at www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/maryburghms. Once up and running, the Shed will initially be open three days a week, for five hours a day, with a regular evening meeting on a Thursday.

Maryburgh Men's Shed is in the process of creating a dedicated website and has just set up a new Facebook account. You can follow them at www.facebook.com/maryburghms. For more information on the Shed, please contact Andy Barnett (Treasurer) on 07792 739600 or Sandy Law (Secretary) on 01349 861609.





Houston and Killellan Kirk Men's Shed receives lottery cash boost

Members of the Houston and Killellan Kirk are raring to go to roll up their sleeves and get to work to progress with plans to develop a new Men's Shed—at West Church Halls in their village's main street—after securing £10,000 from the [National Lottery Awards for All Scotland](#).

The project—which has been two years in the making—began following initial talks at a Conversation Café in 2019 to gauge interest in setting up a Men's Shed in their community.



The congregation got the ball rolling, setting up a project team (pictured above) and began applying for funds to realise their dream.

Project Leader, Adam McCartney, said: “We are really excited to take this project forward on behalf of the community here in Houston.

“The Men's Shed concept is already well established in Scotland and we have taken the opportunity to visit a number of local initiatives and fellow Scottish Sheds already making a favourable mark on their communities.

“I was a strong supporter of this idea when it was flagged up at our Community Conversation Café and, as we face the many challenges resulting from the lockdown restrictions of the past year, I'm even more convinced of the benefits which a successful 'Shed' could bring to our community here in Houston in the period ahead.”

Frankie Greenwood, Families and Community Development Worker at Houston and Killellan Kirk who prepared the funding bid, said: “We are delighted to have secured this vital award from The [National Lottery Community Fund](#) made possible thanks to National Lottery players. The much-needed funding will be used to purchase and install the Shed.

“Men's Shed's make a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of its members by reducing isolation and empowering local people. The Shed will be equipped with workbenches and tools for our members to meet, pursue practical interests and develop their skills. Most importantly, it will be a place where social connections

and friendships can be made and concerns shared – or folk can just go along for a cuppa and a blether—when COVID-19 restrictions allow.”

The National Lottery Community Fund, Scotland Chair, Kate Still: said: “In these uncertain times, our priority is to ensure that National Lottery money continues to flow to charities, voluntary sector organisations and grassroots groups.

“I would like to congratulate Houston and Killellan Kirk Men's Shed on their award, theirs is an important project and will support people now and in the future when they can physically come back together to make great things happen in their community.”

For more information on Houston and Killellan Kirk Men's Shed, please visit:

www.facebook.com/houstonkillellankirk

Logo Design Competition Winner

Houston and Killellan Kirk Men's Shed recently organised a competition for its local primary school pupils to design their Shed logo.

Congratulations to Lucy Dempster, from St. Fillan's Primary School, who was chosen as the winner thanks to her use of bright colours and rainbows mirroring the cheerful and hopeful place they wish their new Men's Shed to be.



A PERSONAL STORY

GO
GLENROTH



by Mike Mowat, Glenrothes Men's Shed

SMSA chats to Mike Mowat (69), Chair of Glenrothes Men's Shed, after hearing about his skills in sign making, painting motorcycles and guitars and his determination to one day, mentor and pass on these skills to his fellow Shedders once lockdown measures ease.

Mike said: "Six years ago, a local Councillor asked me if I had heard about the concept of Men's Sheds and from that discussion, I then got involved in the creation of Glenrothes Men's Shed from its inaugural meeting.

"We started off having meetings in a local hall—sometimes with only three people showing up but we persevered. My background as a Community Connector with the Lottery came in handy and I put my skills, knowledge and contacts to great use to jointly apply and successfully secure funds for the Shed's start-up and development.

"Like many other Sheds, we had trouble finding the right premises until one day we saw a building that met our needs perfectly—a local Scout hall on Poplar Road—and wanted to purchase it and make it our own.

"We are immensely proud of the transformation of the Shed over the years to meet our requirements (see before and after pictures below). Our facilities include a large workshop, computer/electronics room, kitchen, accessible toilets, office, social area, a storage container and a community 'Growing Auchmuty' polytunnel (pictured right). Security is very important to us and we have fenced off the Shed and installed good CCTV."

When asked about the activities on offer to their members, the list goes on and on. Mike added: "We have certainly diversified our offering in line with our growth in membership to now over 100+ members. Members can come along and do a range of things including woodworking, cribbage, chat and have a cuppa in the kitchen or social area, or have a potter in the polytunnel.

"We have created many items to sell to generate funds including planters for Fife Council, reindeer for the Dalgety Bay community at Christmas (pictured below right). We have also been asked to be involved with a project with a local church but unfortunately, that is currently on hold due to COVID-19.



Continued on next page...



Glenrothes Men's Shed—Before



Glenrothes Men's Shed—After



A PERSONAL STORY (Continued)



...continued from previous page

“Before lockdown, I was personally learning how to use the scroll saw and trying a bit of woodturning and it is definitely something I want to pick up again once we are back in the Shed. The sharing and mentoring of skills is something I am really passionate about and I am keen to learn new things but also pass on what I know to others (before I go!). Our glass items including the guitars with LED back lighting (pictured above) are done by my wife Joan Mowat (Shed Secretary) and this is what Sheds are all about—learning, mentoring, sharing ideas and transferring skills for future generations—as well as having fun while we do it.

“My background is in custom paintwork, mostly on motorcycles, and sign making. I had a workshop outside Lincoln for 20 years and lived in Lincoln for over 30 years. I still have the same machines used to cut vinyl and this is something I would love to share with the other Shedders.

“I retired when I was 58, but my wife and I didn’t stop—we moved into property development and also helped run the local bowling club and these are skills that have been transferred to the Shed. I also have a background in motorcycle repair—another skill I wish to share—and currently have a moped in bits in the garage that I am hoping one day soon, one or more of the Shedders can join me to fix it up.

“I also diversified into painting guitars and helmets. I have painted many a guitar over the years—and even done a few for bands. I planned to sell them—my wife keeps asking when the guitars are being rehomed—and this is certainly an area I am keen to bring into the Shed if there is interest.

“Sometimes as a Chair, it is easy to get bogged down with the day-to-day running of the Shed and paperwork and we often do not have time to stop and enjoy the Shed. Every now and then, though, you have to stop and look at what has been achieved and I feel such pride in our team effort. The wife of a member, who suffers from dementia, told us that her husband is a changed man since coming to the Shed and that is all the justification we need to keep doing what we are doing through this Movement.

“At the start, I was not good at public speaking but after a gentle nudge from Tim Green (Community Development Officer for Men’s Sheds at Age Scotland) to talk about our Shed at a meeting with over 50 people in attendance, my confidence has grown. Now, I really enjoy it as I am meeting so many amazing people whilst talking about a subject that I know in and out and am really passionate about.

“During lockdown, we have been creating our newsletter to keep all of our members updated on all things Shed and trying to gauge interest on new activities we can introduce to the Shed to meet our current members’ needs but also to attract new ones once lockdown measures ease. A community newsletter for our area is currently being produced and will be issued four times a year. Almost 2,000 newsletters will be distributed in our catchment area and we are utilising this opportunity to reach potential members and increase awareness of our activities. The more the merrier.”

For more information on GMS, visit www.theglenrothmensshed.org.uk, www.facebook.com/glenrothmensshed and view the [tour of the Shed](#) by Mike himself (filmed in 2018) on the SMSA YouTube channel.



'THE SHED GARDEN'

Do you know your dianthus from your dahlias and your forget-me-nots from your fuchsias? Then, this is the feature for you! SMSA is introducing this new section to The Scottish Shedder—with warmer weather on the horizon—to cover all those gems of handy hints and tips from your fellow Scottish Sheddors.

Does your Shed have a particularly green-fingered Shedder? Do you have a Shed garden, outdoor space, allotment and/or polytunnel packed with prized blooms? Interested in being involved in a future issue? Then get in touch with Michelle at SMSA at comms@scottishmsa.org.uk for a chat!

Spring has officially sprung and for our first feature, we wanted to chat to none other than Bruce Newlands, Chair of The Inverclyde Shed (SMSA's 'Men's Shed of the Year' 2020). We caught up with Bruce to hear all about what's happening at their Shore Street Community Garden in Gourrock.

Bruce said: "Our Shed garden is not attached to our Shed—it's a public site, off a busy road and next to a public park. Since we took over the space in 2019, we have strived to maximise its full potential and over time, we have reaped the rewards. It has provided us with healthy and seasonal fruit and vegetables for our Sheddors and community; a place for experimentation, relaxation, fun and socialising; and it is a real intergenerational gardening experience.

"We have a 'no dig' policy at the garden, it does wonders—providing rich soil and fewer weeds—but also makes gardening so much easier and accessible for all.



"We have ten (3m x 1.7m raised beds at the community garden in addition to some 1ft x 1ft 'gardening experiments' we are working on. These frames have been divided up by string and we are growing a range of things including leeks, lettuces, herbs, shallots and brassicas (cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, pak choi, kale etc). We also have a whole bed dedicated to 'Dooct' garlic which is specially bred for Scottish weather.

"There is also eight wee beds used for spinach and dwarf beans and four have lids on making them into cold frames. We have 16 whisky barrels that have been made into planters for beans and peas but also to hold our 'micro orchard' full of fruit and nut

trees. There are 75 bags of tatties—all varieties—because we found it was just the easiest way to harvest them. We distribute the tatties to local care homes every year before Christmas and New Year.

"We have six compost bins (made out of pallets) on site and a local supply of good fresh horse manure which we let rot down ready to spread on the beds. We get food and coffee grounds donated locally and have also recently started adding wind-swept seaweed, full of nutrients, to the mix.

"We are keen to grow more pumpkin and courgette in the near future as well as Russian Comfrey, rhubarb, gooseberries and Jerusalem artichokes. We have recently joined 'Scotland the Bread' and plan to grow their organic heritage wheat and rye as another experiment. It grows like a bush giving eight times more yield. We will sow in April and harvest in September. If we can get some bread and a few pizza bases out of it then it will be happy days.

"At the tail end of last year, we also got involved in a project—supported by the Corra Foundation and Comic Relief—to plant 40 Scottish Heritage fruit trees and bushes on a disused piece of land next to some residential housing providing a much better view and delicious soft fruits.

"In the winter months, we teamed up with the Bluebird Family Centre to provide meals to Inverclyde families through a soup kitchen and we used some of the garden produce to create some hearty filling dishes there.

"It is really important to us that the garden is not just for our members and we are keen to get the local community involved. With lockdown measures easing, we plan to offer lots more gardening volunteering/learning opportunities over the next few months to get people outdoors and growing together again!"

For more information on The Inverclyde Shed, please visit www.inverclydeshed.co.uk or follow them on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, You Tube and LinkedIn). Click on the video (left) to take a tour of the garden with Bruce.



SHED PROJECTS

Art in memory of Ciara

Members of the Milngavie and Bearsden Men's Shed have designed and created two very special works of arts in memory of a beloved pupil at their local primary school—Ciara Slatterly who died in 2017, aged nine, after battling a long illness.

The pieces—now on display at Killermont Primary School in Bearsden—include a kite designed by Neil Castell and a wind chime designed by John O'Hara (pictured) with ideas thrown in from other Shed members.

Hamish Livingstone, Secretary of Milngavie and Bearsden Men's Shed, said: "The headteacher approached us to create artworks for the school garden to commemorate Ciara.

"John built and tested both designs and was assisted in its safe installation at the school by some physically-distanced Shedders.

"The kite is made of metal with colourful glass beads on wire while the large wind chime is made from recycled bike parts."

Headteacher, Elspeth Smith, said: "We already have a bench and a garden area to remember Ciara and are delighted with these two new additions thanks to the Men's Shed."

Ciara's parents, Gemma and Mark, and her sister Kathleen were very touched by the unique artwork created by the Shedders. Gemma said: "The beautiful kite reflects Ciara's love of Mary Poppins and Let's Go Fly a Kite. I know that for the children, their families and the school staff that knew Ciara—the pieces will always make them smile in memory of her wonderful zest for life.

"It means so much to us, as a family, that her memory is cherished at Killermont. We also want to thank the men who did the work—they have created a perfect piece of art for her."

For more information on Milngavie and Bearsden Men's Shed, please visit www.mandbshed.org and follow them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/Milngavie-and-Bearsden-Mens-Shed-202484870289266



Dunoon Men's Shed gives a hoot!

In the months prior to the first lockdown, Dunoon Men's Shed (DMS) received a request to construct a number of owl boxes for the [Argyll Raptor Study Group](#) which has links to the [Royal Society for the Protection of Birds](#) and [Nature Scotland](#). This followed a similar DMS commission for the group in 2018 and the grand total now runs at some 40 boxes involving two basic designs – one for barn owls and one for tawny owls.

The boxes (pictured right with member, Ian Hamilton) are used both as replacements for older ones (the domestic habits of owls being what they are and the destructive Scottish weather having to be contended with) and some are positioned in new locations where owls have been heard or sighted.

The work was carried out by the DMS woodworking section a.k.a. the "Woodentops" who—when not drinking tea and generally enjoying a skive—enhance their wildlife protection credentials by also making red squirrel feeders, bird nesting boxes, bird feeding tables and much more.

In common with many Sheds, DMS has been on pause in lockdown and they are eager to get back to their Shed with some exciting projects in the pipeline—bee hives next, possibly!

For more information on DMS, please visit www.facebook.com/DunoonMensShed



SHED SHENANIGANS



Why not grab a cuppa and take part in this UK Malnutrition Awareness quiz from...



Q1: Which is the best way to get your 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day?

- A. Fresh fruit and vegetables
- B. Dried fruit
- C. Frozen fruit and vegetables
- D. Tinned fruit and vegetables
- E. All of the above

Q2: How many portions of fish should you eat in a week?

- A. Three portions
- B. One portion
- C. Four portions
- D. Two portions

Q3: Which of these foods does not count towards your 5-a-day?

- A. Sweet potatoes
- B. Tomatoes
- C. Potatoes
- D. Orange juice

Q4: Protein is important for growth and repair. Which of the foods below contain protein?

- A. Beef
- B. Nuts
- C. Lentils
- D. All of the above

Q5: It's natural to lose weight as you get older?

- True
- False

Q6: Which of these is a sign someone might be at risk becoming malnourished?

- A. Clothing/jewellery looser than usual
- B. Loss of interest in cooking or eating
- C. Swallowing difficulties
- D. All of the above

Q7: Estimates show how many people in the UK are at risk or suffering from malnutrition?

- A. 1 in 10
- B. 1 in 20
- C. 1 in 50

Q8: Malnutrition only affects those who are underweight?

- True
- False

Q9: What can help prevent malnutrition?

- A. Avoiding foods high in fat
- B. Eating meals higher in calories & protein
- C. Doing less exercise

Q10: Nourishing drinks provide you with extra calories and protein. Which of the drinks below would be best for someone who was struggling to eat?

- A. Coca-Cola
- B. Black Coffee with two sugars
- C. Milk
- D. Water with diluting juice



CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE

Training Opportunity for Sheds from Eat Well Age Well 'Raising the Issue of Malnutrition' Training, Tuesday 13th April 2021 at 9.30am

This training aims to increase knowledge and confidence around identifying and supporting older people at home in the community who are at risk or are suffering from malnutrition. This training incorporates information on: common signs and symptoms of malnutrition; guidance around supporting individuals using Food First advice; utilising simple tools such as armbands to identify at risk individuals; and gaining awareness in promoting good nutrition and hydration in older adults.

This training is open to individuals who work in the community to support older people. For more information and/or to book a place, please visit www.eatwellagewell.org.uk/raising-the-issue.



‘It’s ok to not be ok’ is more relevant now than it has ever been. When SMSA heard about the ‘Clear your Head’ campaign, our Communications & PR Officer Michelle Wibrew got in touch with the Scottish Government’s Health Communications team to find out more and was offered an opportunity—we simply could not pass up—to interview Dr Alastair Cook, Scottish Government’s Principal Medical Officer for Mental Health.

After graduating in medicine in 1988, Alastair completed Psychiatry specialist training in Edinburgh before becoming a consultant in Lanarkshire. He became Associate Medical Director for Mental health and Learning Disability services in Lanarkshire from 2002. Alastair was seconded to the workforce directorate in Scottish Government from 2007 to 2010 and chaired the RCPsych in Scotland from 2013-2017 also chairing the Scottish Mental Health partnership. He has now returned to Scottish Government as Principal Medical Officer with a passion for improving population mental health as well as service development and improvement.

Dr Cook said: “The coronavirus outbreak has changed life, as we know it, for everyone. These have been worrying and uncertain times—sometimes full of fear, stress and feelings of anger and being overwhelmed.

“It is important to recognise that everyone deals with things differently. We all need to go at our own pace at a speed we are comfortable with.

“What is essential through all of this is that we talk about our feelings and remain in contact and support each other as much as we can in whatever way we need to. Whether it is phone calls, video chats, door knocking, going for a physically-distanced walk or meeting another person outdoors. If you are worried—talk to someone.

“The Clear Your Head website offers tips and advice on how to look after yourself better and keep active. Having a routine is essential as is getting a good night’s sleep and remaining physically active—and taking it outdoors wherever possible—to improve your general health and wellbeing.

“There are a wealth of benefits to be achieved by getting outdoors daily for some me time—it really does clear your head to focus on the things around you. Being mindful, moving more, making time for what you enjoy and enjoying nature—and concentrating on what you see, hear and smell around you—are all things that can combat anxiety, stress and depression.

“As lockdown measures ease and restrictions are lowered or removed entirely, this is yet more change for all of us. Some will be keen to return to normal as soon as possible however others will find it more difficult to go out and return to activities. The same goes for Men’s Sheds, I am sure some are keen to re-open whilst others will be more hesitant. In this case, it is also ‘ok to take it slow’.

“Some people will need to rebuild confidence. Those first steps of getting out and meeting people again will be extremely difficult for some and I am delighted to hear of the SMSA’s recovery strategy including the reopening guidance and Pathfindr devices in place for Sheds.

“The Clear Your Head website will soon be revised with a focus on emerging from lockdown and concentrate on what people need to do to rebuild confidence following the easing of measures.”

“I am supportive of Men’s Sheds and think it is important for Community Link Workers, linked to general practices across Scotland, to be made aware of the activities on offer in their areas. If they have a better understanding of the services available locally then they can social prescribe. Sheds are definitely one of



**Dr Alastair Cook
Scottish Government’s
Principal Medical Officer
for Mental Health**

those options and men should have the personal choice to go along to check out their Shed if they wish to do so. It would be useful for Sheds to open their doors, when they can, to these health professionals for an open day/tour to let them see first-hand what is available.

“It was great to read the recent [research paper](#) from Glasgow Caledonian University’s Sheds for Sustainable Development Project and see an evidence base building. After hearing about this interview, I had a look on the SMSA website and then did a search on the ‘[Find a Shed](#)’ map to see if there is a Shed in my area. There is not one as yet, but with a real mixed population in Callander—where a lot of people move to retire—I suspect it won’t be long until there is a new one there that many people will benefit from!”

Shedders, take some time to visit www.clearyourhead.scot

If you need to talk to someone, you can also call:

- Your GP
- NHS 24 on 111, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year
- Breathing Space on 0800 83 85 87, Weekdays: Mon-Thurs, 6pm—2am, Weekend: Fri 6pm - Mon 6am
- Samaritans on 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year



**Supporting
each other**



**Looking after
yourself**



**Feeling
calmer**



**Keeping
active**



**Creating
routine**

WHAT'S COOKING?

LENTIL CURRY

INGREDIENTS

½ tablespoon oil
½ onion cut into wedges
1 tablespoon of curry paste
200ml vegetable stock
200g of your choice of veg (fresh, tinned or frozen)
25g lentils
50g rice (any kind)
Optional – handful of raisins and/or chopped parsley

METHOD

1. Heat the oil in a large pan. Add the onions and cook over a high heat for about 8 minutes or until they are golden.
2. Stir in the curry paste and cook for a minute.
3. Slowly pour in a little of the stock so it sizzles, scraping any bits from the bottom of the pan.
4. Gradually pour in the rest of the stock.
5. Stir in the vegetables, cover and simmer for 5 minutes.
6. Add the lentils and simmer for a further 15–20 minutes or until the vegetables and lentils are cooked.
7. While the curry is simmering, cook the rice according to the packet instructions. Drain well.
8. Season the curry with salt, toss in a handful of raisins and chopped parsley, then serve with the rice.

No curry paste?

You can use 1 teaspoon of curry powder instead.



CREAMY TOMATO SOUP

INGREDIENTS

1 teaspoon butter
1 teaspoon olive oil
½ onion, chopped
½ tin chopped tomatoes
125ml stock (e.g. chicken or vegetable)
35ml double cream
2 teaspoons dried basil
Salt and pepper to taste

No basil?

Try switching it with any herb you have in your cupboard or miss it out completely!



Don't have a blender?

You can skip this step and enjoy a chunkier soup!

METHOD

1. Heat the butter and olive oil in a pot over medium heat. Stir in onions and cook until tender. Mix in tomatoes and basil. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Pour in the chicken stock, reduce heat to low, and continue cooking for 15 minutes.
3. Blend until smooth.
4. Reduce heat to low, and gradually mix in the cream before serving.

CHICKEN PIE

INGREDIENTS

¼ onion sliced
100g chicken cut into chunks
½ tsp oil
40ml chicken stock
½ small tin of sweetcorn
1.5 tbsp crème fraiche or cream
Herbs to season
200g potatoes peeled and cut into chunks



METHOD

1. Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4.
2. Boil potatoes until soft. Drain and mash with ½ tablespoon of crème fraiche.
3. Heat the oil in a large saucepan then add the onion and chicken. Fry for 5–10 mins until the onion is soft and the chicken is golden.
4. Pour over the stock, bring to the boil, then simmer for 20 mins until the chicken is cooked.
5. Stir in the corn.
6. Add the remaining 1 tbsp crème fraiche and the herbs.
7. Spoon the chicken mix into an oven proof dish and top with mash. Place on a baking tray, then bake until potato is golden.

TUNA CAKES

Makes 4 cakes

INGREDIENTS

125g potatoes (peeled and cut into chunks)
½ tin of tuna
½ small tin of sweetcorn
Pinch of your choice of seasoning
Oil for frying



METHOD

1. Cook the potatoes until tender, drain and mash.
2. Add the tuna, sweetcorn and seasoning and stir until combined.
3. Shape 4 small cakes with your hands.
4. Heat a frying pan and lightly spray with oil, fry on both sides until golden.

No Tuna?

You can use any other kind of tinned fish in place of tuna.



Eat Well Age Well has resources available, including an Eat Well booklet and Recipe book, that you can check out on their website at:

www.eatwellagewell.org.uk/resources



WHAT'S ON?

Older Veterans' Awareness Training



There are around a quarter million veterans in Scotland, many of them older. This free training from Age Scotland could boost your ability to include and support older veterans at your Shed.

The interactive training looks at how to identify older members of the veterans' community; offers an insight into military culture and issues for older veterans; and introduces you to a wealth of extra support potentially available to them in later life. Click on the dates below to book through the Age Scotland website:

- [Monday 10th May 2021, 2pm-4.30pm](#)
- [Thursday 27th May 2021, 10am-12.30pm](#)

For more information about this training, please mail veteransproject@agescotland.org.uk

Research: Experiences of having excess weight in today's society

Have you ever had excess weight?

Would you like to share your experiences and opinions?

Researchers at Queen's University Belfast would like to invite you to complete a questionnaire about your experiences of having excess weight and your opinions on different terms used to describe weight/size.

They are particularly interested to hear the views and experiences of men (over the age of 18).

Please click on the link below to find out more about it and to complete the questionnaire:

https://qubpublichealth.fra1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2nUDx0DJGg8kFKZ

Prostate Scotland ToolBox Workshops for Sheds

Following the recent release of Men's Sheds in Scotland research from [Glasgow Caledonian University](#) on the health benefits of Sheds, Shedders may be thinking more about health awareness and education for their members. With this in mind, [Prostate Scotland](#) would like to let Shedders know about a new opportunity available for Sheds to raise awareness of prostate disease/cancer. Prostate Scotland can offer its new Zoom ToolBox Workshop to individual Sheds or Sheds coming together online.



Why?

A survey for Prostate Scotland found that just over 50% of the general public surveyed and only 1/3 of men over the age of 55 could name a symptom of prostate disease/cancer. Yet an enlarging prostate or Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) affects almost 1 in 2 men over the age of 50. Prostate cancer is the most common cancer for men in Scotland with a 1 in 10 lifetime risk of a man developing prostate cancer. Prostatitis can affect men from the age of 18 with it being most common between 30 and 50 years.

Interested in a Zoom Toolbox Workshop?

So why not get in touch with Mae Bell to find out more and organise a Zoom ToolBox Workshop? It will be well worth 30 minutes of your Shedders' time! Contact Mae on 0131 603 8663 or mae.bell@prostatescotland.org.uk

April is Bowel Cancer Awareness Month



Next month (April) is Bowel Cancer Awareness Month (BCAM) and offers an ideal opportunity to raise awareness of this common cancer in your Shed.

[Bowel Cancer UK's](#) awareness talks empower people by providing them with evidence-based information, as well as practical actions that can be taken to reduce their risk of developing bowel cancer. The talks are concise—only 30 minutes long—and are delivered online over Zoom and MS Teams.

Book a FREE online awareness talk today at:

www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk/how-we-can-help/our-awareness-work/bowel-cancer-awareness-talks



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (**OSCR**) and **Foundation Scotland** have announced a new project which could unlock additional funding for charities and other community and voluntary groups across Scotland.



The Revitalising Trusts project aims to identify charitable trusts registered in Scotland that are inactive, and support them to reactivate.

'Sleepy trusts' are charities that have either had no income or expenditure over the last five years or have donated less than 30% of their total income over the last five years. Initial research has identified around 400 of these trusts.

A similar project in England in 2018 has so far made £32 million available to the voluntary sector. The project is expected to launch in April.

For more information, please visit www.oscr.org.uk/news/revitalising-trusts-for-public-benefit



The **Business Temporary Closure Fund** offers a grant of £2,000 or £3,000 (depending on rateable

value) for businesses required to close by law for the duration protective measures are in place.

Eligibility will depend on the level of restrictions which are in place at any point in time in the location of the business premises.

- £2,000 for premises which have a rateable value of up to and including £51,000; or
- £3,000 for premises which have a rateable value of £51,001 or above

The grant is available for business with premises registered for Non-Domestic rates as at 1st November 2020. Business that pay rates through their landlords may also apply, and local authorities may request documentation proving this, such as a lease or a rental agreement, or other evidence showing that the applicant is explicitly or contractually liable for charges associated with non-domestic rates for the property.

Local authorities have discretion to award grants to eligible businesses which lease or rent premises which are not rated, such as those leased from a council in a public park, provided they are satisfied with the validity and eligibility of individual cases.

Funds will be payable every four weeks in arrears for the duration measures are in place. Three Sheds in the Borders are already in receipt of this grant backdated from the 26th December 2020.

The fund is administered through your local authority and this opportunity is worth exploring to ensure there is not an application cut off date. **Expected closing date June 2021.**

The Scottish Government has confirmed additional investment for the Community and Third Sector Recovery Programme, which will allow **Adapt and Thrive** to continue to support the sector until the 21st June 2021.



Adapt and Thrive offers a combination of advice and funding to support organisations to reflect on their current services and determine which areas need to change, flex, innovate, or grow to be resilient and successful during and post COVID-19.

Funding of up to £75,000 is available to put these plans in motion and is unrestricted so it can flex and adapt around the needs of the organisation. With an end to restrictions now in sight, now is the perfect time to apply to Adapt and Thrive!

For more information, please visit <https://scvo.scot/support/coronavirus/funding/scottish-government/community-recovery/atf/>



The **Magic Little Grants Fund** provides charitable organisations the opportunity to access funding to deliver a range of projects which fit one or more of the below funding themes:

- Improving mental wellbeing
 - Enabling community participation in the arts
 - Preventing or reducing the impact of poverty
 - Supporting marginalised groups and promoting equality
 - Improving biodiversity and green spaces
 - Enabling participation in physical activity
 - Responding to the climate emergency and promoting sustainability
 - Increasing community access to outdoor space
- Grants can be used to support the general running costs of new or existing projects. For example, this could include anything from; supporting homeless individuals to find safe accommodation to organising virtual art sessions in your community, or from purchasing sports equipment to running diversity classes.

Localgiving is working with People's Postcode Lottery, a grant giving charity funded by players of People's Postcode Lottery, to offer charitable organisations the opportunity to **apply for 2,000 grants of £500**. Grants can also be used to cover core business costs.

Apply online at <https://localgiving.org/about/magic-little-grants> by the 31st October 2021 and successful applicants will receive funding within six weeks.

Use the promo code **MLG2021** within the membership payment section to access your free annual membership funded by People's Postcode Lottery.

SMSA Emergency Funding update

The Scottish Men's Sheds Association is delighted to announce the first recipients of its [Crisis Grants For Scottish Men's Sheds](#) as part of the [Scottish Government's winter package funding](#):

- Aultbea Men's Shed
- Strathmore Men's Shed
- Mintlaw and District Men's Shed
- The Shed @Bayview Men's Shed
- Carluke Men's Shed
- Hamilton and District Men's Shed
- Kirkmuirhill & Blackwood Men's Shed
- Alford and District Men's Shed
- Stonehouse Men's Shed
- Men's Shed Govan
- Midmar Men's Shed

These Sheds, some at risk of closure, have received funding for core running costs such as insurance, energy bills and rent from the £30,000 emergency pot implemented to help those most severely affected by the pandemic and struggling with financial pressures.

Funds still remain for SMSA Shed Members to apply online at www.scottishmsa.org.uk/crisis-grants-for-scottish-mens-sheds. *Priority will be made to Sheds with an unrestricted funds bank balance of less than £1,000.*

Carluke Men's Shed raises Portakabin funds through the Kiltwalk

Last September, Tom Kennedy (pictured) and his wife Wendy completed the Virtual Kiltwalk Weekend raising vital funds to go towards a portable cabin for [Carluke Men's Shed](#).



Tom said: "Wendy and I walked 12.4 miles—in 26,492 steps and nine flights of stairs—to help raise additional funds for Carluke Men's Shed which was doubled up thanks to the generosity of Sir Tom Hunter and The Hunter Foundation.

"My wife and I are doing it all again this year, hoping to smash our last target, with monies going towards the purchase of a second, and even a third, cabin for Shed members later in the year! We will set off on Sunday 25th April and walk around Strathclyde Park in Motherwell three times which is the equivalent of 12+ miles (nearly half a marathon in the Olympics)."

Tom is already a quarter of the way towards his target. Every penny counts—you can support Tom, Wendy and Carluke Men's Shed by making a donation at <https://virtual.thekiltwalk.co.uk/fundraising/ScotlandsVirtualKiltwalk2021-TomKennedy>

Scotland's Virtual Kiltwalk 2021 will take place on the weekend of 23rd—25th April. You can take on any Kiltwalk inspired challenge you wish—you can walk, you can run or you can just have fun raising funds for your own Shed, another Shed or Scottish charity of your choice. For more information, please visit www.thekiltwalk.co.uk/scotlandsvirtual



Roslin Men's Shed receives £250 Community Chest boost

Housebuilder [Taylor Wimpey](#) East Scotland teamed up with the [Roslin Community website](#) at the end of last year, to find local causes to share its £1,500 Community Chest.

[Roslin Men's Shed](#) was one of the lucky recipients of a £250 cheque (received by Stewart McLean above). Jim Hiddleston from the Shed said: "We plan to spend the money on plants for a series of planters (like the one pictured) making nice new additions to our Common/Village Green."

Have you won shedloads of funding?

SMSA wants to hear about your funding success stories so that we can share it with others. Please contact comms@scottishmsa.org.uk

SHED NETWORK MEETINGS



The round of network meetings held in January were not very well attended and there was a general feeling of being scunnered.

Jason Schroeder (SMSA Executive Officer) then brought the good news at the National Shed Network Meeting, on the 21st January 2021, that the Association had secured funds for [Pathfinder Safe Distancing Assistants](#) for all Scottish Sheds.

An excellent demonstration film by [Moffat Men's Shed](#) showed how the device could be used alongside strong COVID-19 protocols. Further good news also came in the form of [SMSA's Crisis Grants for Scottish Men's Sheds](#) and there are still funds available through this opportunity and I would urge Sheds to check this out if they have not already done so.

Earlier this month, I attended a Dumfries and Galloway Network Zoom meeting that was much more upbeat due to the majority of attendees expressing that they had received their first vaccine. Chris Jowsey also told us about some of the low carbon installations at the Glenkens Men's Shed in Balmaclellan.



UNFORGOTTEN FORCES
Supporting Scotland's Older Veterans

For the [Unforgotten Forces](#) consortium, currently chaired by Age Scotland, I took part in a podcast discussion on the benefits Men's Sheds can bring to the veteran's community and vice versa. Along with me in the discussion were Jason, David Gardner (SMSA Chair) and Graham Reece (Age Scotland Ambassador). We heard powerful testimony from Stuart Paton about the massive difference the Garnock Valley Men's Shed has made to him. [Have a listen to the podcast here](#). Following up on this, Jason and I led a workshop at the Unforgotten Forces Networking Conference looking at Building Connections with the Men's Shed Movement.

At the next round of Zoom Network Meetings, we will discuss the easing of lockdown restrictions; assess the progress of vaccination roll out; discuss how to use the SMSA reopening guidance and supporting materials; and collectively identify a safe way forward to build back better, greener and fairer.

Lothian Men's Shed Network
Tuesday 20th April 2021, 10am-12 noon

Highlands and Islands (& Moray)
Thursday 22nd April 2021, 10am-12 noon

Ayrshire Men's Shed Network
Friday 23rd April 2021, 2pm-4pm

Perth and Kinross Men's Shed Network
Tuesday 27th April 2021, 10am-12 noon

Fife Men's Shed Network
Wednesday 28th April 2021, 10am-12 noon

If your region is not listed above and you would like a similar get-together, please let me know and I'll arrange it.

Tim Green
Community Development Officer (Men's Sheds)
Age Scotland, PO Box 29245, Dunfermline, KY12 2EH
Mobile: 07718 579 291 | Email: tim.green@agescotland.org.uk



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

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

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Michelle Wibrew
Communications & PR Officer
comms@scottishmsa.org.uk
07389 061498



Jason Schroeder
Executive Officer
ceo@scottishmsa.org.uk
07397 382533



Sue Salter
Administrator
admin@scottishmsa.org.uk
07465 202834

Scottish Men's Sheds Association
Banchory Business Centre
Burn O'Bennie Road
Banchory
Aberdeenshire
AB31 5ZU

www.scottishmsa.org.uk



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