

# THE SCOTTISH SHEDDER

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE SMSA

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SCOTTISH MEN'S SHEDS ASSOCIATION

SCOTLAND'S LARGEST MEN'S HEALTH & WELLBEING CHARITY

*In Scotland, For Scotland*



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**SCOTTISH  
MEN'S SHEDS  
ASSOCIATION**

The Scottish Shedder (the official FREE magazine of the Scottish Men's Sheds Association) promotes news from Men's Sheds across Scotland to showcase their successes (and challenges)—in addition to highlighting funding opportunities, DIY projects, recipes and much more—to inform and inspire. Each six-weekly issue is sent digitally to over 4,100 Individual Member subscribers and supporters of the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement.

### Contribute to The Scottish Shedder

We want to hear all about your Shed, its latest developments and exciting projects and are therefore asking for your contributions for the next issue (December 2024) by Friday 6th December 2024. We urge you to maximise the potential to raise the profile of your Shed and the Men's Sheds Movement in Scotland. Email Michelle Wibrew, SMSA Communications & PR Officer, at [comms@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:comms@scottishmsa.org.uk)

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### Past issues

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

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# TALKING SHEDS

by Jason Schroeder

Wow! What a fantastic celebration of the SMSA's first decade we had on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024 in the amazing Perth and Kinross Civic Hall and Council Chambers.

Thanks to all our staff, trustees, delegates, Perth and Kinross Council, Provost McDade and the 100 SMSA members that attended. It was the most ambitious event we have held to date by our small team and after several options of the type you wanted in our pre-event survey we delivered on that.

Various workshops on your most wanted topics list, speakers from various impact areas on Scottish Men's Sheds, our AGM and of course the SMSA Scottish Men's Shed of the Year awards. A great day—a Shed day.

Huge congratulations to the three finalists and to Banff, Macduff & District Men's Shed who for the first time in the awards took the first place two years running. Maryburgh Men's Shed received Silver and Breadalbane Men's Shed Bronze.

These awards are not about the size of your Shed or the amount of members—it is about the impact your Shed has had the last 12 months.

All of the applications received met the criteria but only three can be chosen. So, I hope all out there are very proud of what you are achieving often quietly in your communities which makes the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement such a success.

It has been our vision and part of our development plan for the past seven years to have six Regional Development Officers over a three-year period. Most of you are aware of our funding issues over these past years but it has not stopped us delivering to the best of our ability and beyond.

We now have a third part-time Development Officer focussed on the Highlands and some of the Islands thanks to a Social Isolation and

Loneliness (SIAL) three-year grant we were successful in achieving. We welcome Ross Murray to our team and look forward to the impact he will have in supporting these regions—see more on [page 8](#).

We are very close to launching the new website and Shed Member accounts package so please do look out for that in the coming month. Like all new things, no matter how much one prepares for all eventualities I am sure the tech gremlins will appear so please do let us know if you experience any and we shall get through it together to create a more streamlined and engaging online national support hub.

This year, we have created a Shed support opportunity for International Men's Day on the 19th November to help your Shed get connected with more of your community and attract new members – if you haven't signed up for the [Shed Open Doors Day](#) yet, then please make sure you take advantage of this opportunity!

The 'Men Don't Talk' play is now in full rehearsal mode and will take to the road across Scotland and the islands in the coming weeks. Please support it by also getting your friends and family, who don't know anything about the ethos of Sheds, to go along. A shorter version is also being put on in Holyrood on the 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024 for our politicians to get an insight and hosted by Craig Hoy MSP. Myself and members of the SMSA Board will also be there on the day. My hope is this will help with substantial investment and funding by the Scottish Government for the 2025/26 financial year.

I had the pleasure of chatting to a Canadian Reporter Ari Blaff last month who is presently travelling in Scotland and wanted to visit some Sheds. I look forward to his column on his return to Canada and hopefully we can share it with you after experiencing Scottish Shed hospitality.

Presently, we are working on some new guidance for Sheds with regards to Social Prescribing. This is a complex issue as all social prescribers are run by individual councils, so we are experiencing good and challenging reports of this from our members.

Alison Leitch from the Scottish Social Prescribing Network (SSPN) was one of our presenters at our gathering event and I shall be reciprocating at their event on the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2024 to share with social prescribers and others about how Scottish Men's Sheds are run, how to approach a Shed if they would like to bring a person along and to be very clear that Scottish Men's Sheds care but are not carers.

We are presently in multiple discussions seeking guidance on the best way forward for all parties involved. If you would like to have input, please speak to one of our regional Development Officers as soon as possible.

To end off this Talking Sheds, I would like to sincerely thank our Chairman David Gardner, SMSA trustees and Jim Paterson from Aberchirder & District Men's Shed for creating another beautiful and most fitting award—made of stag horns, Damascus steel, recycled whisky barrels and metal work—for my ten years of service to the SMSA and the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement.

I received this surprise at the AGM on Friday and it is sometimes hard to believe that I have been in this movement for fifteen years and started the SMSA charity ten years ago – how time flies when you're having fun as they say. I am deeply touched by this gesture and thank all of you Shedders who every day keep creating our vision of a Scotland where every man if they choose might be able to join and experience the magic of a Scottish Men's Shed. Proud to be a Scottish Shedder and hope you are too. Onwards into the next decade!

**Jason Schroeder**  
SMSA Chief Executive Officer



# SMSA GATHERING AND AWARDS

## **Banff, Macduff and District Men's Shed does it again! 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' winner announced at SMSA 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration**

**Banff, Macduff and District Men's Shed has only gone and won the 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' title for the second year in a row! Representatives from the SMSA – the national support hub for 200+ Scottish Men's Sheds and Scotland's largest member-led men's health and wellbeing charity – made the big announcement at their gathering and day conference on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024 to mark the charity's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.**

The event featured a jam-packed day of learning and networking for guest Sheds from all across Scotland before the announcement of the winner of the prestigious 'Scottish Men's Shed of the Year' Awards where the three inspiring finalists—Banff, Breadalbane and Maryburgh Sheds—received the nail-biting news.

SMSA CEO Jason Schroeder said: "Banff, Macduff and District Men's Shed won the title last year and are the first former winner to ever reapply and we are delighted that they did! They have taken the title once again with Maryburgh Men's Shed coming a close second followed by Breadalbane for our bronze winner.

"When we launched these awards back in 2019, it was never about winning – every Shed is a winner at the end of the day! The purpose is to raise awareness, celebrate, recognise and reward Scottish Men's Shed volunteers for the work they are carrying out to improve men's health and wellbeing and the impact that they are making in their local communities. The tenacity of the Sheddors to pull together never ceases to impress me. It is testament to personal and community commitment working selflessly for better quality lives."

Mr Schroeder presented the winning Shed with the unique and esteemed SMSA target trophy engraved with the Shed name and displayed in its stand designed and produced by inaugural winner, Aberchirder & District Men's Shed who were present at the event. Banff Shed will now hold the trophy until next year's winner is announced.

Banff, Macduff and District Men's Shed Chairman Bob Copland said: "We have got so much out of the awards last year that we reapplied to support the programme and the SMSA. We really didn't expect to win again but, now we are over the shock, we are absolutely thrilled!"

*Continued on next page...*

**Pictured (top to bottom):** Banff, Macduff and District Men's Shed receiving the winner's target trophy; Maryburgh Men's Shed with their silver trophy; Breadalbane Men's Shed takes home the bronze; and the esteemed SMSA target.



# SMSA GATHERING AND AWARDS



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Along with the title and trophy, Banff Shed receives prizes and discounts to support the running of their Shed including a £500 unrestricted cash prize from the SMSA (paid for through SMSA Shed Membership fees); a £150 voucher from Axminster Tools; a £250 voucher from Scotmid Co-operative to keep the guys going for a while in tea and biscuits; a free Machine Competency and Woodwork training day from David Young Training worth £638 (David Young pictured left); and a year's free accounts package from Thyme Accountants worth £360 to support their Treasurer. David Young also produced the mini targets (pictured left) for the silver and bronze winners.



The anniversary event was supported by partners including Morrison Construction, Asda, Costco UK, Tesco and Morrisons. The conference also featured a 3D Printing Showcase by Paul Stewart from Three Towns Men's Shed; an MOT4Men preventative men's health workshop delivered by the SMSA; the Community Asset Transfer Process delivered by Community Ownership Support Service (COSS); and Machine Competency and Woodwork Safety delivered by David Young Training.



Dr Danielle Hutcheon (left) and Julie Cowie from Glasgow Caledonian University talked on their new research on the 'Impacts of Men's Sheds on the Health and Wellbeing of Working Age Men from Disadvantaged Communities'. Alison Leitch from the Scottish Social Prescribing Network presented on 'Social Prescribing in Scottish Men's Sheds' – and the SMSA announced that they are currently working on guidance to share with their Shed members – and Mark Bloomfield from Axminster Tools also spoke on how they can support Men's Sheds with advice and discounts to kit out their Shed workshop.



Guests were also treated to a pre-tour peek of the 'Men Don't Talk' Play before Pete Lannon, Engagement Officer for Genesis Theatre Productions, highlighted some opportunities available for Sheds to get involved in the upcoming Scottish tour kicking off from the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024 by providing some props from their Shed to the venues to give each performance a real feel of a Shed.

The event was made possible thanks to civic hospitality from Perth & Kinross Council. The Association received a civic reception and welcome from Provost Xander McDade (pictured left) and were also joined by Perth & Kinross councillors and senior managers including Vice Lord-Lieutenant Alex Cairncross, Moderator High Constables Society of High Constables Bill Duncan and Lord Dean of Guild Home Euan Begg.

Provost Xander McDade said: "We gathered here today to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Scottish Men's Sheds Association charity and the wonderful volunteers that run Men's Sheds in their local communities. What has been achieved in ten years is phenomenal – from the launch of the first Scottish Shed in 2013 to now having 203 open or developing Shed groups. They are delivering transformational work and we look forward to seeing even more in the next ten years."

All presentations from the day are available on the [SMSA website here](#).

EVENT ORGANISER	EVENT PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS			
<b>EVENT HOST</b> 				



## The Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry wants to hear from more men about their pandemic experiences

Let's Be Heard, the Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry's listening project, is looking to hear from more men about their experiences of the pandemic, particularly on the topics of:

- access to welfare, including benefits, food and essentials;
- paid and unpaid carers;
- experiences of becoming new fathers and grandfathers; and
- men's experiences of mental health.

Let's Be Heard is the main way in which people can contribute to the Inquiry's investigations and help inform its reports and recommendations.

There's still time to join more than 5,400 people across Scotland who have already shared their experiences of the pandemic. To find out more and take part in Let's Be Heard, please visit: <https://lbh.covid19inquiry.scot> or contact the team by:

- emailing [LetsBeHeard@covid19inquiry.scot](mailto:LetsBeHeard@covid19inquiry.scot);
- leaving a voicemail at 0808 175 5555; or
- writing to us at Freepost SCOTTISH COVID-19 INQUIRY



## Supporting community organisations to find the perfect space!

Have you heard about [Community Spaces](#)? Community Spaces supports charities and start-up businesses to source properties to be used for any purpose from retail to cafes and storage to Men's Sheds!

Community Spaces becomes your main point of contact to source the perfect space to meet your needs and will support you for as long as is needed.

They offer two main services—fee free property sourcing as well as a chargeable bespoke property sourcing service.

Charities and community organisations are at the core of what they do and their charity clients come in all shapes and sizes!

You can [subscribe](#) to receive their updates like their latest [Property List \(September 2024\)](#).

Figures as at end of September 2024



**162**  
SMSA SHED  
MEMBERS

**4,131**

SMSA INDIVIDUAL  
MEMBERS



**138**  
OPEN SHEDS

**65**

DEVELOPING/  
PROPOSED SHEDS



**32**  
LOCAL AUTHORITY  
AREAS

## UPDATE YOUR DETAILS WITH THE SMSA



New email address?  
Moved house?



Change of Office  
Bearers? New Chair?



Not sure if you are a  
member or not?

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

[Click here to notify the SMSA](#)



## Learning from OSCR's inquiries: Dominant behaviour in charities



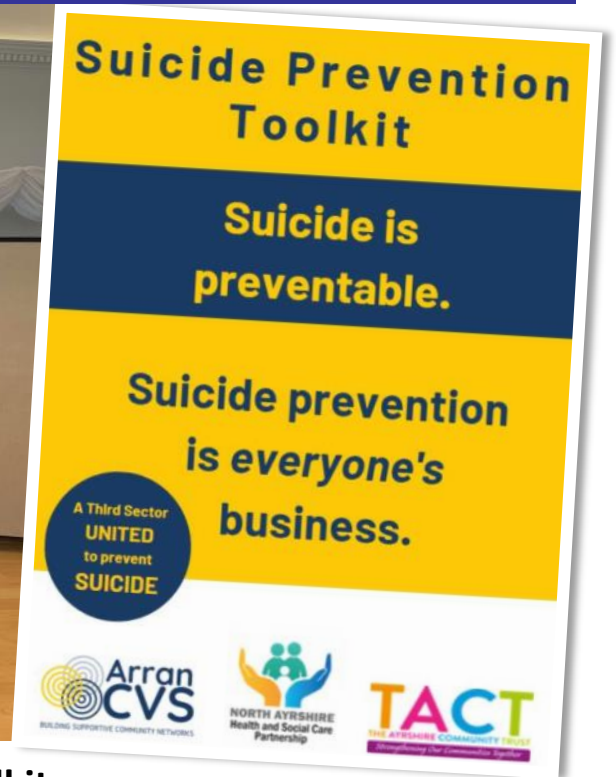
August 2024

## OSCR Guidance for dominant behaviour in charities

One of the most important aspects of being a charity trustee is acting with collective responsibility. Allowing someone to dominate the governance of a charity may mean the charity trustees are failing to meet their legal duty to act in the best interests of the charity.

OSCR is becoming increasingly concerned about dominant behaviour in charities so this month (August 2024) have published a [new report](#) on this topic which explains more about the common themes and lessons learned from their recent inquiries.

[Read the report here](#)



## Launch of Third Sector Suicide Prevention Toolkit

*On Thursday 5th September 2024, SMSA Chairman David Gardner and SMSA Development Officer Stewart Beck attended the launch of the Third Sector Suicide Prevention Toolkit.*

Stewart and David (on the left) are pictured with Simon Smith and Gus McLafferty from [Men's Shed Dalry](#) and Scott Jamieson from [Three Towns Men's Shed](#).

The two Sheds were heavily involved in its development alongside [Arran Community and Voluntary Service](#), [North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership](#) and [The Ayrshire Community Trust](#).

Gus McLafferty from Men's Shed Dalry said: "It is important to share this document far and wide—it is not just for our region—suicide is everyone's business. The key things to look out for are in this document—the common triggers, myth busting, breaking the stigma, opening up and talking about suicide, conversation starters if you are concerned for someone and how to support the individual and seek help if you are out of your depth."

Please share the link to the online toolkit with your Shed Trustees and members and have a copy printed and available at your Shed premises.

[Download the toolkit](#)

# MEET OUR NEW HIGHLAND DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

**Meet Ross Murray, SMSA's newly appointed Development Officer covering the Highland area and supporting Fort William, Kinlochleven, Aultbea, Ullapool, Lochcarron, Spey Shed, Inverness, Nairn, Dingwall, Maryburgh, Cromarty Firth, Dornoch Firth, Daviot Care Home, Black Isle, Broadford and Strath, Muir of Ord, Beauly, Badenoch, Strontian, Fort Augustus, Glen Urquhart and Mallaig Men's Sheds.**

Ross has 35 years' experience in a variety of adult education settings, both as a tutor and a development worker. Ross has a proven record in adapting to challenges in a range of environments and has broad experience of working with adults of all ages, aspirations and backgrounds.

After graduating with a B.A. in Photographic Studies he worked in community arts projects; as a photography tutor, inspiring people to tell their own story through photos and words; as a literacy/creative writing tutor in Edinburgh prison, various employability programmes and a range of community projects, empowering people with barriers to inclusion including disabilities, addictions, mental health difficulties, poverty and social isolation.

Ross worked with the Workers Educational Association (WEA), for the last 12 years in partnership with Falkirk

Council on a variety of projects – Core skills for 18 to 25-year-olds, Workplace Literacies and Employability Skills in Job Clubs – gaining considerable experience and developing long-term partnerships.

In the Falkirk Job Clubs, he developed a holistic drop-in provision working with people with multiple barriers. Reducing isolation, increasing confidence and self-esteem, developing a peer support culture and forming friendships were all essential ingredients for securing employment.

Ross is passionate about the power of informal learning and its impact - creating opportunities, learning and sharing skills, building connections and improving well-being.

Ross will be visiting the 22 Men's Sheds (listed above) across Highland in the coming weeks and months and making connections to enable the development of new Sheds, for example in Ardersier, Wick and Thurso.

**Ross Murray**  
**Part-time SMSA Development Officer for the Highland area (three days a week until the end of March 2025)**  
**07777134950**  
**[dev3@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:dev3@scottishmsa.org.uk)**



## Upcoming Regional Shed Network Meetings 2024

- **Perth and Kinross** – Tuesday 22nd October 2024 from 11am at Breadalbane Men's Shed
- **Fife**—Thursday 31st October 2024 from 11am at Rosyth Men's Shed
- **Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire**—Wednesday 6th November 2024 from 11am at Midmar Men's Shed
- **Lothians** – Thursday 7th November 2024 from 11am at Armadale Shed
- **Greater Glasgow and Clyde** – Thursday 7th November at Inverclyde Shed

All Regional Shed Network Meetings are listed on the SMSA website at <https://scottishmsa.org.uk/events>



# SMSA DEVELOPMENT UPDATE—EAST COAST



I continue to facilitate [MOT4Men](#) workshops at the facilities of SMSA Shed Members that have registered an interest so far and remain blown away with how open and honest Shedders are in sharing their lived experience of health and wellbeing.

Shedders are willing to share their success and challenges in managing a healthy lifestyle including smoking cessation and controlling alcohol consumption and living with: diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiac and respiratory conditions and cancer including skin, bowel and prostate.

From all of MOT4Men participants, there is a universal agreement that attending the Shed has made a significant contribution to improving their health and wellbeing.

I have also had the pleasure of accompanying our latest addition to the SMSA Development team [Ross Murray](#) on visits to Muir of Ord and Nairn Men's Sheds.

At Muir of Ord, we discussed accessibility, insulation and renewable energy, safe working practices, utilities, SMSA membership and funding including Scottish Community Alliance support for Shed-to-Shed visits.

There have been several Sheds taking full advantage of their SMSA membership benefits and eligibility to apply for funding through the [Community Learning Exchange programme](#) to visit their fellow Scottish Sheds to connect and learn from each other—[see updates from three recent Shed-to-Shed visits in this issue here](#).

At Nairn Men's Shed (pictured bottom right), Ross Murray and I were fortunate to meet some new members of the Committee and discuss inclusion and maintaining a safe space to pursue the aim of improving men's health. We also discussed: dust extraction; renewable energy solutions in a listed building and funding.

If your Shed would like a visit from a member of our Development Team to discuss how the SMSA could support your Shed, we are just a call or an email away!

**Tim Green**  
Part-time SMSA Development Officer for the East Coast  
(two days a week)  
07493361003  
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# SMSA DEVELOPMENT UPDATE—WEST COAST



*My extensive travels continue around our amazing country, with its inspirational Sheds and Shedders. This past wee while I've been out on the road to visit more Sheds in Dumfries & Galloway, some in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde area, and some a bit closer to home, in Ayrshire. Below are a small selection of those, with some things I want to highlight here in The Scottish Shedder, in the hope that it may spark your imagination and lead to some inter-shed relationships and conversations, for our mutual benefit.*

If you're into your history, go visit Kirkdale Men's Shed in Dumfries & Galloway, an off-grid former sawmill in a country estate, running on renewable energy. Combine it with a visit to the nearby Cairn Holy site, two neolithic burial mounds reputed to be the resting place of the mythical Scottish King Galdus. Having visited a range of neolithic sites myself, this place rivals any of them. It is stunning and Shedder Tony Powell would be only too happy to show you around.

Further north, on the fringes of the Glasgow Metropolis, Milngavie & Bearsden Men's Shed is well worth a visit, a great example of how Shedders are breathing new life into public parks and making vital contributions to community life. From renovations of auld milestanes and benches, to engaging with local schools on STEM projects and mud kitchens, these guys have really built a solid reputation in their community.

Across the other side of the city, and firmly on the history trail yet again, I learned how Barrhead Men's Shed are restoring an old bier. And before you say "no alcohol in Sheds", that's a bier, not a beer. In the days before

motorised transport, this was a method of transporting coffins by hand. A local undertaker asked the guys to renovate this relic of a bygone era for his shop display. He will be really pleased with this. Again, a great example of Sheds linking with the wider community in a truly diverse range of ventures.

In another fine example of men taking action on health and wellbeing, I was asked to attend the launch of the [Suicide Prevention Toolkit](#) at Saltcoats Town Hall, in Ayrshire recently, where representatives of Three Towns Men's Shed and Men's Shed Dalry worked with the local Third Sector Interface to produce a resource that will support people in our communities who may be experiencing suicidal thoughts.

These two Sheds have been at the forefront of efforts locally to change the narrative, and the toolkit is aimed at breaking the stigma around suicide, encouraging people to talk about it. We all know men who've been affected by suicide, and the knock-on effect of this on families, friends and the wider community. This event, and the decisive efforts of our Shedders, have made me resolve to be more open in my conversations and to take more notice of the health and wellbeing of those around me. It is definitely good to talk!

Aside from Shed visits, lately I've been particularly involved in promoting Sheds within Scottish Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS) Wellbeing Days. This is proving to be a very worthwhile exercise, as many of the firefighters I speak to, by nature are practical and hands-on sort of people. When I speak to them in groups, I notice that the more mature (ahem) amongst them are the ones

paying the most attention and asking the most questions; retirement planning, I'm sure.

I've also been asked along to speak at one of their Living Well groups for retired firefighters. I arrived in the car park to find a bunch of smiling, happy people, hugging and joking, generally looking like they were enjoying life. My opening gambit, knowing full well what the answer was likely to be, was: "what do you miss most about your career in the fire service?" Invariably, the response is that they miss the banter and the camaraderie. I then spoke about how getting involved in Sheds can help make new friends and replace the geniality that they once experienced in their jobs.

We all have a story to tell, of how Sheds have made a difference in our lives. So, let's spread the word far and wide, in the hope that many more men will participate in the largest men's health movement in the country!

**Stewart Beck**  
**Part-Time SMSA Development Officer for the West Coast**  
**Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday**  
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[Dev2@scottishmsa.org.uk](mailto:Dev2@scottishmsa.org.uk)



# SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT



**The SMSA chats to Hamish Thom, Chairman of [Spey Shed](#), which now has 25 members and growing steadily—so much so, that they are beginning to feel that they are already outgrowing their current premises. Could a future move be on the cards?**

Hamish said: “Four years ago, our local authority, The Highland Council, funded a woodwork teacher to open up on Friday afternoons for members of the local community to undertake woodwork activities there.

“Although, it was not called a Men’s Shed as such, it was a wee taste of what was to come with a great social side, with exceptionally good craic, and a place to learn new skills. There were 20 of us attending regularly before Covid came along.

“The pandemic changed everything and no longer could we meet at the school. We were devastated, what were we going to do? From there, our will to set up a Men’s Shed in Granttown-on-Spey began. We had no money, no constitution but we certainly had a committed group of men keen to have somewhere to meet again so we began our journey.

“I contacted the Cairngorms National Park and The Highland Council as well as their grant team about our vision and initial discussions were extremely encouraging.

“But then my wife Claire Thom, who just happens to be the Chairperson of the Grantown YMCA Community Centre on the High Street, offered us a room to meet. The workshop and social area (The Howff) were in a state of disrepair so, in return for being rent free for the first year, we offered to fix it up and make it a new and improved usable space to meet our members’ needs.

“The Highland Communities Mental Health Fund awarded us £7,000 which helped immensely to get us up and running. We fitted out the room, rewired, decorated, built wheelchair-accessible benches, constructed storage, sourced tools and repaired the stair lift (bottom right) which one of our members could not be without.

“The community started to hear about us and started donating items and Wickes also made a generous donation of tools. Wood was so expensive so we started recycling wood and receiving donations and surplus wood from local companies and individuals. We also began working with our local community development company, the Granttown Initiative, which supports local projects for the benefit of our community.

*Continued on next page...*



## SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT (Continued)



*...continued from previous page*

“We became aware of the SMSA at this stage and formed our committee and then we received our SMSA Shed Members handbook which helped us out hugely with many things—and saved us reinventing the wheel— such as securing discounted insurance and gaining charitable status. The SMSA has been an excellent support—we have full admiration for the association and they are always there—it’s great to have them just a call, email or visit away if we need assistance.

“We had plans to advertise our official opening widely but in the end, we really didn’t need to. Word was spreading fast across our community—we were already very well known and respected—and in July 2023, we held our official opening (pictures below) and what a day it was!

“Our committee spent a great deal of time putting systems and processes in place to deliver on our duty of care responsibilities for safe working. We found that we were struggling to have two Shed Supervisors at all times—especially in the warmer months—so the Shed members and trustees made the decision to close the Shed down over the summer holidays each year.

“So much work has gone into getting our Shed to this stage—as a friendly and supportive space for the people of Strathspey—and although we are already feeling with our current 25 members, that we are starting to outgrow this space, we still want to take some time to enjoy this stage and a wee breather before we even think about moving—after all, that’s what it’s all about. To manage our numbers, we are also thinking about implementing an online system for members to book themselves in for a slot to ensure everyone’s safety.

“Spey Shed aims to grow to add other skills, crafts and potentially other Strathspey locations however right now our current space meets our needs. We feel a real part of the community—we recently received a £500 donation from the local church that uses the centre and £500 from the Highland Hub to improve our heating and insulation.

“We have access to kitchen facilities and even a cinema at the YMCA centre! There is so much potential and opportunities available to us that we have not had time to explore yet—we could potentially introduce cooking as a new activity for our members.

“We are also keen to visit other Sheds to learn from them and will be looking to apply, through our SMSA membership, to the [Scottish Community Alliance Learning Exchange](#) to fund this.

“Really, the world is our oyster. Yes, we do have our eyes on another potential building but, we have such a great relationship with the YMCA that we are staying put for a while. But, watch this space!”





## Sanday Men's Shed is open!

***The grand opening of Sanday Men's Shed took place on the 18th August 2024 with 150 guests joining them in Kettletoft for a community BBQ and cutting of the ribbon ceremony. Representatives from the SMSA and fellow Sheds on Mainland Orkney and Westray also travelled for the event to offer their support.***

Sanday is one of the North Isles of Orkney and is the third largest island in the archipelago. It is known for its agriculture, sandy beaches, and rich wildlife and it has a peaceful, rural atmosphere with great views and a population of around 500.

But, despite its beauty, Sanday faces challenges such as limited access to services, long trips to the nearest hospital, high energy costs and an aging population. Social and cultural opportunities are limited, leading to wellbeing issues like social isolation and mental health problems. These challenges inspired the creation of the Sanday Men's Shed to foster community and support residents.

Francis Edwards from Sanday Men's Shed and is also an SMSA Trustee said: "Some five years on from our first meeting, we finally completed the renovation of our Shed and went from a 'Shed in development' to the 138th fully open Shed in Scotland. We were the second Shed to be set up here in Orkney, and we now have five Sheds across the isles of Orkney".

"We were delighted to welcome our local MP, the Rt Hon Alistair Carmichael, along with Jason Schroeder, SMSA Chief Executive Officer (pictured below) to our official opening. Alistair delivered a poignant speech highlighting the significant health and wellbeing benefits of the Men's Shed movement, particularly in remote rural areas.

"And, our Chairman David Macdonald shared the inspirational journey of how our members have

transformed the old, dilapidated former Co-op store into a warm and inviting facility over the past five years and bringing it back for community benefit. David also expressed heartfelt thanks to the many individuals who played crucial roles in bringing the project to fruition.

"The opening ribbon was ceremonially cut by Rona Towrie (pictured above) and Steven Muir, in memory of their late family members and the Shed's founding members—Jim Towrie, Rona's husband, and John Muir, Steven's father. It was a powerful moment of remembrance for us all.

"Ironically, our Men's Shed owes its inception to a local woman—Magda Macdonald the island's Wellbeing Coordinator—who, in September 2019, met with the established Orkney Men's Shed and arranged for their members to introduce the concept to Sanday men. At the opening event, we extended our gratitude to Magda and Eleanor Asquith, granddaughter of Shed member David Ogden, presented her with a flower arrangement as a token of our appreciation.

"In double quick time the idea took off and Sanday Men's Shed soon had a committee. With the help of the SMSA, a constitution was drafted and thanks to Sanday Development Trust, a long-term peppercorn lease of a dilapidated former store was secured in Kettletoft village.

"By early 2020, donations of tools began to arrive and work commenced on renovating the building. Despite pandemic disruptions, by September 2020, we were up and running and started to contribute to several small projects around the island. Over the next four years, a small team dedicated their Saturday afternoons to working on the Shed. It was stripped bare, roof and window leaks fixed; walls insulated and lined; electricity, heating, water, drainage all introduced and a kitchen and toilet were installed.

*Continued on next page...*



Flower presentation to Magda Macdonald



SMSA CEO Jason Schroeder with the Rt Hon Alistair Carmichael MP and Francis Edwards of Sanday Men's Shed

*...continued from previous page...*

“Currently the Shed has 35 members, all drawn from the local community and in true Orcadian tradition, many a yarn is had when we get together. We are looking forward to islanders and visitors to see the fruits of our labours. In getting this far, we remain indebted to the advice and support of the Men’s Shed community and our doors will always be open to fellow Shedders should they ever take the journey to our little corner of the world.

“Attendees enjoyed live entertainment from local musicians and a delicious BBQ—courtesy of a generous donation from Voluntary Action Orkney Mental Health and the Well Being Fund—which featured the best of Orkney produce, with the BBQ structure itself constructed by the Shedders in the weeks leading up to the event. Donation buckets on the day also raised just over £500 to be spent on future Shed ventures.”

SMSA CEO said: “I was delighted to attend the opening of Sanday Men’s Shed. It is always a pleasure, after sometimes years of supporting Sheds through their development journey, to see the doors finally open to serve as a healthy space that meets the needs of the men in their communities and benefits their health and wellbeing.”

“On the 15th August 2024, the SMSA held its second Islands Regional Shed Network meeting. The meeting was hosted by Orkney Men’s Shed in Stromness with 50 men in attendance representing Sheds in Sanday, Shapinsay, Stronsay and of course Orkney. The Islands Shed network is really starting to grow which is heartening to be a part of to improve social connection and combat social isolation and loneliness.”

Echoing these statements was MP Alistair Carmichael who added: “It was an excellent turnout for the grand opening and it was a pleasure and an honour to be part of the day. Getting to this point has meant a lot of hard work and commitment by the Sanday ‘Shedders’ and it is clear that they have the community behind them so I am confident that it will be a great success.”

“If you ask almost anyone with an understanding of these matters they will tell you that mental health

support in this country has come on enormously in recent years. They will also tell you that there is a gaping chasm between where we are and where we need to be.

“There is far more that our governments can and should be doing to boost mental health provision but there is also a lot that we can do individually and as a community to help one another where we can. That is where projects like Men’s Shed can play a vital role – and why I was glad to join the opening of the newest Shed.

“For all that we are fortunate to have a strong sense of community here in the isles, we are by no means immune to issues of mental health – particularly the challenges of social isolation and loneliness.

“Farming, to give just one example, has changed over the years from a business which by necessity was based around large families and many additional workers to one in which most local farms are now run by one or two people. That is a recipe for isolation and poor mental health, which is why it is no great surprise that farmers have some of the highest rates of suicide amongst the professions.

“More generally we have moved to a world in which greater numbers of people work from home. That has brought significant advantages for many, and in the long term has the potential to make it easier for people to join and grow our rural and island communities, who might otherwise have been forced to stay in towns and cities. If we are not careful, however, there is a risk that home working fuels isolation – if we do not create and proactively support opportunities for people, particularly men of all ages, to connect with one another.

“Mental health is an issue for all people but it is a men’s health issue in particular, as any number of surveys and studies have demonstrated. The Men’s Shed model is a pretty simple concept but it seems to work, and the Men’s Shed movement is growing at an impressive rate.

“At a time when social isolation and loneliness are causing ever greater problems in our communities, having facilities like these in our communities becomes ever more important. There is a role for government to encourage these initiatives but ultimately that can only take you so far.”

## New evening opening and Model Makers Club venture at Foggie Shed

*Last week, [Aberchirder and District Men's Shed](#), better known as [Foggie Men's Shed](#), began a new venture opening their Shed doors one evening a week for activities including model making.*

Jim Paterson from Foggie Men's Shed said: "Our new evening opening will offer an additional opportunity for existing members—and hopefully attract new ones, potentially working men who can attend in the evenings—to partake in activities.

"It will include model making, woodworking, 3D printing, machining, working on our

own OO gauge model railway or just to come along for a game of cards, darts and/or a coffee and a blether.

"I am a keen modeller myself—boats and trucks are my favourite—and we are hoping to attract more modellers in our village to get them all together and start a new Model Makers Club.

"We had models on show on the first successful evening (photos below) including our railway and also had some people from the Banff area joined us also.

"One of our members Dirk Verbiest (top photo) recently won the 'Senior Best in Show' prize at the Aberdeen Modellers Society's 'Aberdeen Scale Model Show 2024' in August for his Ukrainian T-64 diorama (pictured right).

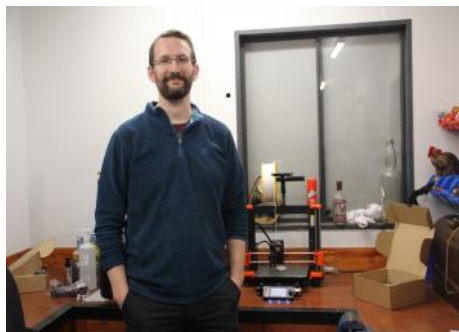
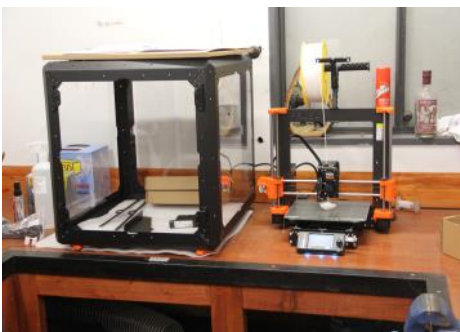
"We hope that the club will attract more model making enthusiasts along to the Shed."



Photo: Aberdeen Modellers Society



Photo: Aberdeen Modellers Society



## Garnock Valley Men's Shed secures full ownership of building

***Huge congratulations to [Garnock Valley Men's Shed](#) on their news of taking full ownership of their former cleansing depot building from North Ayrshire Council!***

Back in 2020, Garnock Valley Men's Shed (GVMS) was granted a 25-year lease of the Cleansing and Ground Maintenance Depot at Ladysmith Road, Kilbirnie, through a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) and has now bought it outright.

At a recent North Ayrshire Council cabinet meeting, it was agreed to sell the property to the group through a CAT for £2,750—a 95% discount on its £55,000 value.

Shed trustee and former Chairman David Gardner said: "We are very grateful to the Council for their continued support for Men's Sheds. This purchase is the culmination of six years of effort from the trustees and GVMS members in bringing a semi-derelict building back into use and, with the support of the Council, bringing it up to 2024 standards.

"Ownership of the building allows us to approach a wider range of funders, thereby securing the future of the Shed for the benefit of our members across the Garnock Valley.

"Our whole ethos centres on the health and wellbeing of men aged 18 and over, allowing them to socialise and develop their personal skills. We look forward to welcoming new members following our refurbishment."

The organisation was also awarded £20,000 in Community Investment Fund (CIF) funding back in September 2021 for new heating through the Garnock Valley Locality Partnership. They also received Council funding in 2018 for initial renovations.

And six apprentices – who are residents in North Ayrshire - from the Council's Building Services team

contributed to the project by helping with works at the building over a ten-day period.

This offered them a great learning experience and showed them how partnership working can help make a difference in communities.

A report to Cabinet highlighted that full ownership "will provide the group with additional opportunities to invest in the building to meet their needs".

As well as the practical benefits of the Shed, it also helps to tackle social isolation and address mental health issues by giving men a safe place to discuss their worries openly.

Councillor Alan Hill, Cabinet Member for Communities and Islands, said: "Sheds are a great way for men in our towns and villages to get together, learn new skills, enjoy a coffee and talk about things in a relaxed environment.

"The trustees and members at GVMS should be applauded for making great use of the space and for encouraging men to get involved and make some new friends while learning new skills.

"Enabling our apprentices to lead on projects of this nature not only puts their excellent skills to good use, but also strengthens their links with their community and helps them develop a sense of awareness of the different social situations within North Ayrshire."

David and the group have already improved the building, including making accessibility better with support from the Council's Building Services team and funding for materials from the CAT Start-up Fund. In addition, Community Investment Funding (CIF) was used to install a modern new heating system.

This great example of partnership working aligns with the Council's three priorities of wellbeing, communities and local democracy and tackling climate change. The group is also working towards a greener approach to utilities, and they are stopping materials going to landfill by using donations of wood and furniture in projects.

GVMS is open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays between 10am and 1pm. All welcome.

***[Article contributed by North Ayrshire Council](#)***





# Scottish Men's Shed Open Doors Day



SCOTTISH  
MEN'S SHEDS  
ASSOCIATION

International Men's Day  
Tuesday 19th November 2024

*Men's Shed*

REGISTER  
YOUR SHED'S  
INTEREST ON  
THE SMSA  
WEBSITE

All  
Welcome!

To mark International Men's Day this year, participating Scottish Men's Sheds will open their doors for unique group tours to potential new members, partners and social prescribers to see what Sheds are all about!

Scottish Men's Sheds, that are SMSA Shed Members, can register their interest at [www.scottishmsa.org.uk/doorsopen](http://www.scottishmsa.org.uk/doorsopen)

## Lanark Men's Shed marks one year in!

*Lanark Men's Shed has marked 'one year in' at their New Lanark World Heritage site. Shed Chairman Alan Ross reflects on a busy twelve months thanks to their passion-driven trustees, dedicated members and a supportive surrounding community.*

The Shed's impressively large premises—now, with two extra units and opening three additional days and one evening a week—has created so many opportunities for the Shed and a rise in membership by over 100% and a massive increase in their footfall.

Alan said: "Our second unit was initially our machinery workshop but it then became our wood store and we then expanded even further as we took a third unit which is now our machinery workshop. We now have three operational workshops fully equipped with every bit of machinery we currently require (well, for now).

"As well as selling from our own premise we now produce and provide specific items sold within the New Lanark gift shop. These items are produced by us with their logo laser inscribed.

"We have had a lot of commissions too which has generated great revenue for the Shed including large planters for the New Lanark Hotel; a 2.4m patio table, benches, four large trough and square planters with trees and shrubs for New Lanark; restoration of a Victorian wooden bed; five wooden tapestry stands for Macmillan Cancer Support; tool restorations for axes and old historical workshop tools for private commission; condiment storage boxes for the New Lanark Cafe and our unique sofa made from the rear seats of a Rolls Royce Corniche Convertible ([see the finished project here](#)).

In the last few months of 2023, we were extremely busy. We attended the Mental Health Art Project in Carstairs; one of our members completed a 10-day walk of the spiritual Spanish Camino and gave a talk about the experience at Lanark library; another member was asked to compose a poem as a well versed writer for the William Wallace Memorial in Lanark; and we received a new kitchen donated by Howdens. We also hosted visits from various organisations and charities including the Youth, Family & Community Learning, the head injury unit at Hairmyres hospital, Jamie at the Bell Group who supplies us with paint and varnish—and nominated us internally to the Drax Group for a £2,000 grant.

"We also made an agreement with our local cycle shop to receive their used chains and bike parts and we reuse the pieces to make clocks. We made our first clock which we presented to Graham at the cycle shop as a gift. In November 2023, we sourced a contact for a constant supply of whisky barrel staves. He came and talked to the group with ideas of how to use the wood, what we can make and then....he became a member!



"We also received the Tesco blue token award and the co-op community fund award and were invited to attend Age Scotland's 80th Anniversary celebration at Scottish Parliament. We also carried out machinery awareness training for 16 of our members through [David Young Training](#) and had various visits to and from other Scottish Sheds which was great fun and much was learned and shared by all.

"Just before Christmas, we were awarded funding again from the National Lottery Community Fund and then in the new year, were awarded the VASlan Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund. Our new 3D printer and equipment also arrived courtesy of two grants from Warburtons and the Robertson Trust so in February, we got all of our ducks in a row (literally) to commence our plans for Easter 3D duck printing—200 ducks and 250 Easter eggs—for the New Lanark duck race and scavenger hunt, as you do! And, now it is all 3D printed light-up ghosts, ghouls and pumpkins for Halloween.

"Having bumped into the Headmistress of Carmichael Primary School in a local garden centre, we started to chat and discovered that the Shed had been referred to her as an organisation that may be able to help them with their Eco-Committee's project (made up of pupils from P1-P7) to improve their playground. We began working with Carmichael Primary School right over the spring and summer.

"Working with the kids on the committee was a great laugh. Some of the items they asked for were a chocolate slide and a swimming pool! This project was taken on by a special group of our members who gave 100% to everything and in return received such a welcome and appreciation from everyone at the school—it was such an overwhelmingly rewarding thing to do. We were also invited to their end of term leaving ceremony which was so special to be a part of.

*Continued on next page...*

## Lanark Men's Shed marks one year in!

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"The large volume of work entailed the erection of enclosing walls in their summer house, adding small herb boxes to go on the outside, building a partially roofed quiet corner with a storage seat, flower pots, upgrading two mud kitchens, building wooden hobby horses and welly boot holders! Also, four raised planters with busy board lids incorporating X & O game, a bean bag game, wooden tracks for cars and hoopla.

"The Castlebank Park gardener got involved and not only provided fruit and veg to plant, but also gave a talk on the importance of self-sufficiently growing food, and how they could incorporate the herbs, fruit and veg into their daily healthy eating within the school. This was such a successful project that we plan step into again and again over the next year or so. A separate community appeal resulted in us receiving petrol lawnmowers and cutting equipment for the cause.

"Part of our progression this year was to create a five-year strategic business plan which we knew would be beneficial especially in applying for larger grants. Funding for this was provided via Community Enterprise who awarded us assistance to create this on our behalf using their [Accelerate](#) programme, funded by Scottish Government.

"Community Enterprise also came onboard to help us generate an online member survey which we wanted to use to receive feedback on how we are doing as a community organisation, what our members felt we were doing good, not so good and areas for improvement. This shows that we care that we are providing the best experience at the Shed not only in projects but in being a safe space that supports our members needs and health and wellbeing.

"Community Enterprise are also currently helping us by creating a functional website. We feel this is the next step in providing a secure channel that our followers can now order our products directly online. It will also connect directly to our Facebook page and vice versa, and our Facebook will continue as our active way of promoting what's going on at the shed.

"On top of this support, we received a micro grant from the Royal Burgh of Lanark Community Council and were awarded funding from the Leavenseat Trust fund which allowed us to purchase metal racking for the wood store. We also received a substantial cash donation from a passing member of the public and a large donation of timber from Symington House and local business BHC builder merchant for our commissions including a wooden gate and bespoke wedding signage.

"In August, we held our open day, BBQ and market stall which was extremely well attended by friends, old and new. Last month, we held our first 'new project' afternoon trying out beginners epoxy resin. We have discovered this is a very expensive hobby and will most definitely require funding towards it but it was certainly enjoyed by all.

"So, as you can see—we have not been twiddling our thumbs! All of this along with the every day running of the Shed, the admin, reporting to funders, the visitors and meetings and online network catch ups....its been an amazing crazy, busy, whirlwind year which we wouldn't change in a heartbeat.

"Finally, we cannot forget that without the generosity of the New Lanark World Heritage Trust we would not have had this hugely successful and productive first year. The Trust's generosity, support and belief in what we do has been greatly appreciated. We now move forward to secure further operational funding to ensure we grow and continue on our journey."



## Milestone making at Carluke Men's Shed

*It has been another couple of months of milestone making, ticking things off the wish-list and lots of fundraising for [Carluk Men's Shed](#)!*

"In July, we successfully completed the installation of an accessibility ramp up to our Shed entrance thanks to our members, Jamie and David. Without their skills and time, we could not have made this happen.

"This is yet another major milestone and huge check off of our wish-list to ensure that our Shed facilities are fully-inclusive and accessible to all that wish to attend.

"A team of 12 of our Shed members headed back to one of our favourite places, Motherwell FC, for another Shed bucket collection on Saturday 3rd August 2024. This is an activity that we thoroughly enjoy and it helps raise substantial funds towards the running of our Shed—fundraising at its best for us. The only downside was that Motherwell only managed to draw 0-0 and dropped two points in the first Premier League match of the new 2024/2025 season!

"We work in partnership with the football club and are in the process of building six planters for our project to improve the community garden at Motherwell F.C.'s Fir Park Stadium for our community. We support each other.

"On behalf of our Shed, I also had a very interesting visit to the [Welcome All Hub](#) in Carstairs. The charity offers, amongst other things, community advocacy for local citizens, a food essentials hub and pre-loved clothes hub for those that need it. Finding out more about local projects like these informs us to signpost our members if they require support.

"Fifteen of our CMS Members and four partners set sail on another day trip last month (Wednesday

4th September 2024). This time visiting Loch Katrine in the Trossachs. On the Loch itself, we sailed on the 'Sir Walter Scott' steamship built in 1899—amazing engineering and still going strong—before having a lovely lunch at The Steamship Café.

"Our members' days out are always very popular. We all thoroughly enjoyed this one which lasted a total of six hours—so bring on the next one!

"Two of our most-respected and much-loved members have not been in good health of late. Member John Green has been in and out of hospital so we dropped by to wish him a happy 91st birthday at home and let him know that we are ready with open arms when he is able to return.

"Our member Iain Roddick has unfortunately been in Kirkknowes Care Home for a wee while now. Iain was Chief Piper for the Shotts Pipe Band in their heyday so he can pipe a few tunes on his chanter that's for sure! On his 73rd birthday, we had to make a big fuss of him and show him how much we care so dropped in to celebrate. He was in good spirits when we left him practicing on his new guitar! We look forward to seeing John and Iain back in the Shed when they can.

"Last month, my wife Wendy and I spent a great morning at the Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire AGM and were amazed when Co-op Member Engagement Activator Susan Kelly announced that we had been nominated for an award in recognition of the voluntary work we do—what an honour that was!

"There is lots more on the cards. Right now, we are planning and looking forward to Saturday 12th October 2024, when our Shed will help out, in our own small way, for our friends at Macmillan Cancer Support. From 10am until noon, we will host a Macmillan Coffee Morning at the Shed premises. All welcome!

"The coffee morning is not only raising money for a great cause but it is also an opportunity to show everyone who comes what we have achieved during the past 15 months since we moved in. We have been busy-bees! Onwards and upwards!"



**Pictured (top to bottom):** CMS with the new ramp installed; bucket collection at Motherwell FC; Tom Kennedy and his wife Wendy attending the VASlan AGM; day trip to Loch Katrine; and CMS Member Iain Roddick with his new guitar.

## Perth Men's Shed Chairman works his magic at 'On Your Mind' conference

**On the 4th September 2024, Perth Men's Shed Chairman Adrian Harris took to the stage to present on the benefit of Sheds along with an impressive lineup of health experts from all across Scotland as part of the Scottish Head Injury Forum (SHIF) conference at Perth Concert Hall.**

SHIF invited the Shed to exhibit and present at its 'On Your Mind' conference which discussed mental health after brain injury and explored services and opportunities to support mental health.

The event featured various speakers—all experts in their field—including Professor Paul Haggerty (Rowett Institute, University of Aberdeen) discussing the influence of nutrition on brain function and mental health, Dr Thomas Stroud (Aphasia Patient Case Study) and Dr Emma Williams (Associate Clinical Psychologist for Neurotherapy Services).

Perth Men's Shed Chairman Adrian Harris then took to the

stage to work his magic (quite literally) and delivered a 20-minute presentation to a full audience—which included acquired brain injury survivors, their families and carers and professionals from across Scotland.

Adrian said: "My presentation shared what really goes on at the Shed, our activities on offer and the impact and benefits. It was very well received by those present on the day. As well as managing to be a little light hearted, I also managed to squeeze in a baffling magic trick at the end! They didn't know that I have been a magician since the age of 9 and I was delighted to have everyone baffled at the event!"

SHIF Convener Paula Gribben said: "We were so impressed with Adrian's presentation. He spoke of an inclusive, welcoming and supportive group who provide a safe space to learn new skills, support their community and build new relationships.

"With the diminishing specialist support available to those who are living with a brain injury, having such a group willing to look beyond disability and offer a chance to engage can be a lifeline to many. The benefits to our mental health and wellbeing from having a sense of 'belonging' are well documented, and those attending Men's Sheds are given the opportunity to 'belong' and be accepted."



**Pictured (top to bottom):** Adrian Harris presenting at the conference; Perth Men's Shed's exhibition for the full day of the event; and items created by Shed members.

## Inverclyde Shed celebrates top horticultural accolade

**Inverclyde Shed's impressive gardens, growing spaces and apiary have only gone and won the Keep Scotland Beautiful/Royal Horticultural Society Community Engagement Award for 2024!**

The Shed operates two community gardens, the Shore Street Community Garden in Gourock and the Muirshiel Lane Community Garden in Port Glasgow as well as creating growing spaces for local groups and schools.

Bruce Newlands from Inverclyde Shed, who travelled to the awards ceremony at Duthie Park in Aberdeen to receive the award, said: "We pride ourselves on our all-year round growing community gardens which thrive on our 'no-dig' and sustainable gardening methods promoting biodiversity. We also maintain fruit orchards, polytunnels and soft fruit growing and have an eco-



friendly process of transforming our organic waste into nutritional compost to supply all our areas. It was fantastic to see our efforts recognised and attend the event in Aberdeen to pick up the award, eat cake and celebrate alongside Scotland's growing communities."



## Scottish Men's Sheds help tackle invasive American mink

**Local Men's Sheds across northern Scotland partner up with the Scottish Invasive Species Initiative to control invasive species and protect native wildlife!**

Following a call for help earlier this year, local Men's Sheds across northern Scotland have teamed up with the [Scottish Invasive Species Initiative](#) (SISI) to tackle the invasive American mink. The [Alford](#), [Arbroath](#), [Cromarty Firth](#), [Elgin](#), [Ellon](#), [Forres](#), [Finecht](#) and [Ullapool](#) Sheds are the latest recruits to join the Initiative's mink raft building team!

The floating mink rafts are used to establish if mink are present in an area and, once detected, the rafts are put into 'trapping mode'. Live traps are used so non-target animals can be released unharmed and trapped mink are quickly and humanely dispatched.

American mink are a well-known and invasive non-native species which spread throughout the country following fur farm escapes in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Being an opportunistic predator, often killing more than they require for food, mink have a devastating effect on native wildlife. Ground nesting birds and water voles (Britain's most rapidly declining mammal) are made particularly vulnerable by this avid hunter.

SISI Volunteer and Communications Officer Jane Hamilton said: "Thank you to all the Men's Sheds who came forward to help this year by constructing this equipment for us. Mink rafts are essential pieces of kit to monitor and trap American mink, but they're not something

you can get off the shelf, so this work done by local Men's Sheds is invaluable in our efforts to tackle this invasive species."

"Over 150 sets of rafts and tunnels have been constructed for us and this equipment has been deployed in river catchments across our project area which covers Perthshire, Angus, Aberdeenshire, Moray and parts of the Highlands. Thanks to the efforts of local Men's Sheds we have been able to expand our project further this year and reach into new areas. American mink are notoriously elusive so it's really important to have good coverage in our network to ensure this invasive species isn't moving around undetected."

"We're delighted to say that the hard work of the Men's Sheds and our dedicated project volunteers has paid off – we have broken our record for the most mink captures ever in a year! Our previous highest annual total was 169 mink in 2019 and our current total for 2024 (mid-September) is 190 mink, bringing our total for the entire project to 854 mink. This is all thanks to an increased use in remoti units (a new high-tech device) and to expansions into new areas, which has only been possible thanks to all the Men's Sheds who came forward to help earlier this year."

"Thank you to everyone who has joined our raft building team and to the Men's Sheds, including Stanley, Peterculter and Brechin who have helped in previous years of the project. We couldn't do this without you."

**Details on how to build a mink raft are available [here](#) and if your Shed is interested in getting involved– or if you'd like to adopt your own mink raft–please contact [sisi@nature.scot](mailto:sisi@nature.scot)**



**Pictured (top to bottom, clockwise):** Collecting equipment from Elgin Shed; Elgin's logo stamped on their mink rafts; Forres Men's Shed; Arbroath Men's Shed; Cromarty Firth Men's Shed; and a mink raft in place.

## Forth Valley Men's Shed 'Local Hero' attends 25th Parliament Anniversary

*Chairman of Forth Valley Men's Shed (FVMS) Kenny Quinn, as a nominated 'Local Hero', attended the Scottish Parliament's 25th Anniversary in the presence of Their Majesties, the King and Queen last month.*

Back in May 2024, every Member of the Scottish Parliament was asked to nominate their local hero—one of their constituents who have made an extraordinary contribution to their community.

A cornerstone of the event was to recognise and celebrate our Local Heroes and this is only the fifth time that they have taken part in the opening ceremonies.

The special commemorative anniversary event took place in the Debating Chamber and celebrated the achievements since the first sitting of The Scottish Parliament in 1999.

Kenny, who attended with his wife Linda, said: "This was a truly memorable occasion and I am extremely honoured to have been chosen by my local MSP,

Alexander Stewart for my work with the Men's Shed.

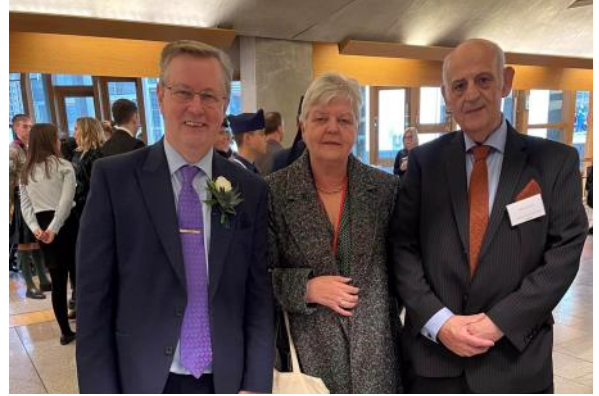
"This has not been our only celebration of late though. In April, we held a celebratory dinner for the members after winning an Age Scotland Award. The Lord Lieutenant and Alexander Stewart MSP gave inspirational speeches at the event and we also had a piper and folk singer to entertain our members and guests.

"Recently, we have also been involved in our local hospital's community garden project which is an important tranquil space for patients and their family members and visitors to have to get outdoors, enjoy nature and have time to think and/or relax.

"We have created over 40 planters, fairy houses for the enchanted garden and an arch to transform the space.

"As a result of this work, we have also received another large order for planters for GP surgeries and we have been invited to give talks at the NHS and have also got involved in Green Gym's— fun, free outdoor volunteering sessions offered across the UK transforming local green spaces.

"Hopefully soon, we will have another big reason to celebrate as we progress with plans to take ownership of the Marshall House building (pictured right) in Alloa as our new premises. Watch this space!"



**Pictured (top to bottom):** Kenny Quinn and his wife Linda at the Scottish Parliament event; FVMS celebration dinner; the hospital community garden; and Marshall House.

## Aberchirder Shedders learn life-saving skills

*In July, nine members of Aberchirder & District Men's Shed completed a one-day certified course in Emergency First Aid at Work at SCQF Level 6 in addition to Defib at Work training delivered by Tillycrody Support Services in Aberdeenshire in the Shed's local village hall.*

First aid helps save lives by preventing the medical

situation from deteriorating further and providing relief to the patient. The course covered many life-threatening situation including dealing with collapse, choking, bleeding, shock, seizures, minor incidents and using a first aid kit.

All members were successful in passing the practical and theory examinations at the end of the day. The course was extremely informative and well delivered and a most enjoyable day was had by all!





## Zetland Men's Shed's doors are officially open!

***After 18 months of hard work, Zetland Men's Shed held its official opening last month and greeted friends old and new—including a dozen new members!***

New Chairman Andy Colley said: "Although we have been open for a few months, we held our official open day on the 11th September and are absolutely delighted with how it all went.

"We had lots of good food supplied by Kersiebank Community Education Centre and great music from local musician Gordon Bell who performed along with one of our members, Robin Marshall. And to top it all off, we attracted 12 new members who are going to come back after having a look around the Shed on the day. It doesn't get much better than that.

"Our members and trustees have worked extremely hard over the last 18 months to get to this milestone event and our Shed now being all kitted out and able to meet the needs of our growing membership.

"A local company donated our 40ft x 13ft portable cabin and we worked on it to get it exactly how we wanted it. It took a bit of time but we finally got there.

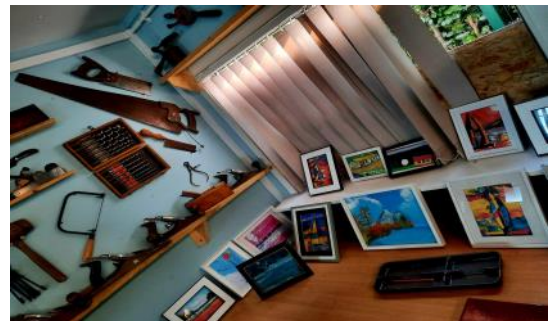
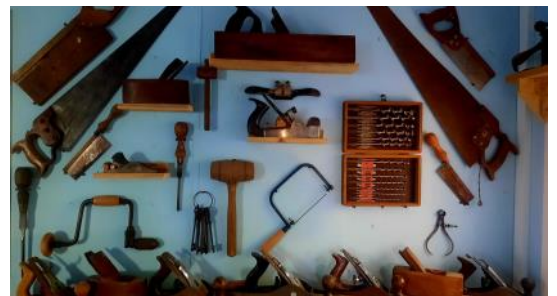
"We received excellent feedback (and pre-orders) from the community for our planters, bird boxes, tables, wooden model cars and paintings. It is great to have our community's backing.

"We have also received a huge amount of donations of tools to kit out our Shed. Some of the tools were 60-100 years old so we have made a 'tools from the past' feature wall (pictured right) in the workshop area for all to enjoy.

"Our guests on the day were given a guided tour of the facilities and got to hear all about what activities go on there as well as having a hands-on opportunity to try out some crafts.

"Following our AGM on the 19th September 2024, we go forward with so much potential with our new committee at the helm—myself stepping from my former role of Acting Chair/Secretary into the Chairman position and Stuart Skeleton, as our new Secretary, Treasurer Robin Marshall and Vice Treasurer, Ian Smith. The future really does look bright for Zetland Men's Shed!"

**Zetland Men's Shed is based at Kersiebank Community Education Centre at Dundas School on Oxgang Road in Grangemouth and is open every Wednesday.**





## Sheds race in the Castle Douglas Soapbox Derby!

*[Glenkens Men's Shed and Kirkmuirhill and Blackwood Men's Shed \(KBMS\) competed in the third annual Castle Douglas Soapbox Derby on Sunday 14th July 2024 to a crowd of 6,000 spectators. They may have both been out on their second run but they did us all proud!](#)*

The Shed teams entered this popular fast-paced gravity racing event with their homemade, non-motorised soapbox carts down the track, through the obstacles and against the clock.

The Glenkens Shed entry 'Ferret' (pictured above right) was driven by Shedder Chats Harris and entered to the Dad's Army theme tune! However, as Private James Frazer from Dad's Army would say, they were 'doomed' when their kairtie was unfortunately damaged and out of the race after the second run.

The KBMS team—Driver Alex Hunter, Brakeman Dennis White and Tom Arlott and all the other pit crew (pictured below)—entered to 'Born to be Wild' and certainly got their motor running. [Check out their entrance and newfound dancing skills](#) and their [first race video](#) here before unfortunately [crashing on the second run!](#) A friend of the Shed Angela Lavery penned this excellent piece (right) to celebrate their efforts on the day.

**The next Castle Douglas Soapbox Derby date has already been announced as the 13th July 2025. Has your Shed got what it takes?**

**The SMSA has been offered [FREE REGISTRATION](#) to Scottish Men's Shed teams for 2025 (usually £50) [Click here to register.](#)**



**Kirkmuirhill & Blackwood Men's Shed entry**



**Glenkens Men's Shed entry**

### 'Games a Bogey' Written by Angela Lavery (A friend of KBMS)

I canny remember who alerted us tae the ad  
A bogey run at Castle Douglas. There's surely glory tae be had  
A mad idea was born that we couldn'y suppress  
Wi jist hud tae enter. Wi full effort, nuthin less  
We convinced oorselves, this beauty we could build  
And we'd reach the end of the race without getting killed  
Efter much scratching heids and a fair bit of banter  
We decided to build a "Supersonic Planter"  
Materials were gathered and the designs were done  
As we set out oor tools, forecasting months of fun  
Nearly ready, we arranged a test run down the back rd at the hole  
Tae reach the end, past the chikane wis oor goal  
A bit slow ower the ramp, but the gradient wis at play  
We aw knew that it wid run much better on the day  
Arriving in the van, we enthusiastically assembled oor cart  
Screwdrivers and spanners were flying, assuring an excellent start  
Then at the top of the platform, oor "Pit Stop Crew"  
Entertained wi a dance, talents revealed. Who knew?  
We raced doon the ramp at terrific speed  
Our first run was very promising indeed  
Second time round  
As we launched aff the ramp, the steerin column failed  
The front row of spectators visibly paled  
As the bogey veered sharply right, breaking through the guard  
We flew through the air and hit the ground hard  
The bogey exploded in a fountain of wood  
A body pulled from the wreckage. It didnay look good  
Everybody held their breath, then,....relieved, let oot a sigh  
As Alex emerged and held his erms tae the sky.  
Meanwhile, Tom, sped to the rescue to offer his help  
Skited doon the ramp and let oot a yelp  
As he crashed down to the bottom and landed flat  
Another injury, wi unmentionable bruises, but, we better no talk  
about that  
I was gashed and bleeding, my erm in a sling  
But the adrenaline wis pumping. I never felt a thing  
Thank God we had put crash helmets on our heid  
Without their protection we would surely be deid  
Alex's bruises lasted two weeks or more  
Wi limbs black n blue, it looked really sore  
I wis lucky, ma erm healed much faster  
A few extra inches could have spelled disaster  
Although the experience was thrilling and gave us a buzz  
Mair sensible people would advise, bogey racing might no be for us  
Since then, oor adventure made us glad tae be alive  
But.....Just Imagine the bogey we can build in 2025!

# A PERSONAL STORY



**When the SMSA received a letter from Rodney (Rod) Ainsworth, 80 years young from Lossiemouth Men's Shed, expressing how much he enjoyed being part of the SMSA and the Scottish Men's Sheds Movement following his retirement from the fire service and moving to Scotland, we had to share his story...**

Rod said: "I had spent many years working and living outside the UK and then four years ago, I made the decision to retire from the fire service. I wanted to leave the place I was living in Canada, near Niagra Falls, and return and settle back down somewhere in the UK.

"I made a list of all of the requirements I wanted the place to meet. After a perusal of many places that came near to my list, I finally found Lossiemouth! Not only did it meet all of my list requirements, but it also provided a few bonus extras. Therefore, Lossiemouth it was!

"For those who don't know Lossiemouth, it is in the far North East of Scotland and located approximately half way between Inverness and Aberdeen, and very near the historic town of Elgin. It is a seaside town popular with tourists and hosts two caravan camping sites and a beautiful harbour and marina.



"On arrival in Lossiemouth, everything was new and exciting to me—but having grown up and worked in Yorkshire, before moving for work abroad—you will appreciate, I was still somewhat at a loss living here. Things were so different and one of the main things I had to adjust to was the Scottish accent.

"Fortunately, I was blessed with wonderful neighbours who helped, advised and guided me through everyday life and, it was through them that I found out about the Men's Shed.

"The Shed has been the most spectacular thing that has ever happened to me. They invited me into their community and through their meetings, chats and general get-togethers, I have opened an entirely new chapter in my retirement.

"I have made so many new great friends and am developing new skills such as wood turning! We have outings to other Sheds in the area, visits to local places of interest and visiting speakers capable of enlightening us on many different topics, particularly men's health issues.

"Through the Shed, I have also become more aware of our community which has broadened my scope of living. I now have a bus pass and am informed of local events, such as the Highland Games and have joined the local rowing club.

I also take part in Christmas Fairs and Charity Fun Days etc.

"I'm 80 now, but feel about 50 in the head! Maybe I should slow down a bit, but hey ho, maybe not! I am enjoying everything that life has to offer right now.

"My life has been enriched beyond anything I could ever have imagined or wished for. I can truly say that the Shed has brought me a new and exciting era.

"I have found that everyone at the Shed has a unique background, and we all have stories we can tell. This is what makes it so interesting and the companionship is fantastic.

"I recommend to any gentleman with time on their hands or feeling a bit lonely, living on their own, or just getting under the wife's feet a bit—go down to your nearest Shed, take part, enjoy the blether, learn something new or just put the kettle on!

"I guarantee you will enjoy the experience. It's all free, and there are no rules for you to attend at certain times, you just go when you want and take part if you want to. It's your choice! And, it's a healthy choice!

"I hope by sharing my experience with others that it even encourages one more person to join the wonderful association which is the SMSA and connect with your local Shed. Don't sit at home in front of the telly. Head to the Shed—you certainly won't regret it!"

**Pictured. Top (left to right):** Rod Ainsworth (left) with Lossiemouth Shed Treasurer Ron Burgess; and David Walker (Shed Chairman), Bill Tweddle, David Tompson and Rod. **Pictured left:** the Lossiemouth Sheddors

# SHED-TO-SHED VISITS

## Inverclyde Shed hosts Barrhead visit

***Inverclyde Shed** hosted a visit from Barrhead Men's Shed on the 29th August 2024. As an SMSA Shed Member, **Barrhead Men's Shed** was eligible to apply for funding for the Shed-to-Shed visit through SMSA's partnership with the [Scottish Community Alliance's Learning Exchange programme](#). The day was full of chat about dust extraction systems; the purchase of new Shed machinery and the duty of care to keep their 70-strong membership safe.*

Barrhead Shed Secretary Robert Humphrey said: "Our Sheds are both part of the Greater Glasgow and Clyde region and we have heard so much about Inverclyde Shed's story that our members wanted to see it for themselves and had three key learning outcomes.

"Our Shed has previously only purchased DIY/domestic type machinery but as we get busier we are finding that the machines are wearing out and breaking down quite often so we wanted to learn from the Inverclyde members about their experiences with purchasing their more expensive industrial-based machines.

"In our workshop, we also have individual dust extractors coupled to each machine so we wanted to see how their dust extractor system works and performs. Inverclyde has an excellent system installed that collects sawdust/shavings from all machines via a pipework system to a central collecting point so it was great to see this in action and definitely something to consider for our Shed.



Bruce Newlands from Inverclyde Shed said: "The Inverclyde Shed doesn't exist in isolation, we thrive because we are part of meaningful and diverse networks that support what we do. Visits and community networking like this is creating valuable relationships with like-minded people by engaging with others who share an interest, vision or purpose."

Robert added: "We had a great visit to Inverclyde and a very tasty lunch made from fruit, veg and honey produced at their Shed's community gardens. The kale and carrot soup was delicious. The whole day, from start to finish, was an excellent opportunity for some of our newer members to see first-hand what is possible! It was such a productive day with an excellent exchange of information on how we do things at each Shed. The Inverclyde members are now keen to visit us soon too!"

## Stonehouse Shedders head to Moffat!

***A group of 15 Stonehouse Shedders** boarded a bus to visit [Moffat Men's Shed](#) last week (2nd October 2024) funded by the [Scottish Community Alliance's Learning Exchange programme](#).*

**Stonehouse Men's Shed** Chairman Graham Curtis said: "Our members had a very successful trip to Moffat where we were welcomed by the Chairman Peter Hillhouse and the other members. Based in an industrial unit on the outskirts of the town, the members were busy repairing furniture and preparing benches for the village. One of the lady members was preparing displays for lead windows and our oldest member John McGhie, 97 ([read John's story here, p26](#)) was fascinated by the attention to detail.

"We came bearing gifts for our fellow Shed kind enough to host our visit. A selection of biscuits but the Moffat Shedders were more interested in the two jars of honey from our Shed garden brought down by our bee keeper, Stewart.

"Following a tour and many discussions, we travelled to Moffat Golf Club for a feast of soup, sandwiches, chips and tea/coffee. We were well looked after and even got a doggie bag for the road. We then had a walk around the town buying local sweets and toffee.

"Our thanks to the SMSA for endorsing our application, the Scottish Community Alliance for awarding us the funding to pay for this learning visit and Graham, the LDVG driver from Larkhall, who safely spent the day driving us around. On returning to Stonehouse everyone commented on a very successful day and as usual things always learnt from another Shed and new friends made. We look forward to our newfound Moffat friends coming to visit us soon in Stonehouse."



# SHED PROJECTS



## It's-a me, Mario!

The 1st Gourrock Scout approached [Inverclyde Shed](#) to make a super-sized Super Mario for their upcoming Blair Atholl Scottish Scout Jamboree Camp!

The young men from the Scouts group did a great job of painting the six foot Mario with paints donated by Crown Paints



## Ever fancied sitting in the back seat of a luxury Rolls Royce?

Well now you can! [Lanark Men's Shed](#) has created this absolutely stunning and unique seat from a Rolls Royce Corniche! The supporting frame has been made from their supply of American Oak and would be perfect in a man cave, as a gaming station or in a Men's Shed social area! Classy recycling lads!



## Straw art at Inverurie Shed

*Inverurie-born straw work artiste Elaine Lindsay was invited along to [Inverurie and District Men's Shed](#) to give a demonstration and also offer the members a chance to try out a replica straw spinner, that they had created, for themselves.*

Inverurie Shedder Robert Paterson said: "Earlier this year, a lady came to us bearing a strange and rather intriguing contraption. She told us it was a device for spinning straw which she had borrowed from a local lady who runs straw craftwork classes and asked if we could make a copy for her own use."

"We got our thinking caps on and rose to the challenge. It certainly made an interesting change from bird boxes."

"After much thought and trial and error, our team came up with a very similar replica of the straw spinner. Elaine was delighted to try it out!

"I have since made three more spinners and even had enquiries from a straw artist in France!

"Their model required the diverse skills of several Shedders and co-ordinated teamwork was the key element.

Elaine's group, the [Scottish Straw Workers](#) meet in the Chapel of Garioch hall in Inverurie on the last Sunday of every month and she brought along some of the tools of her trade to the Shed—splitters, darning needles, scissors, dog combs, a trough of water to keep straw pliable but "the best tools are your hands" said Elaine.



**Pictured (top to bottom):** Straw artist Elaine Lindsay instructs Inverurie Shedder Robert Paterson in the art of straw spinning; and some of Elaine's intricate designs in spun straw. *Photos and text courtesy of Griselda McGregor*

# SHED PROJECTS

## Bearsden phone kiosk gets new lease of life from local Sheddors

*A sense of melancholy is often felt when we see disused and derelict phone boxes in our communities. The famous red phone booths are sadly no longer required for their initial purpose but there is still plenty of life in them yet with many communities transforming their local iconic red payphones into anything from homes for defibrillators to food banks and book exchanges and even coffee huts! Here, the [Milngavie and Bearsden Sheddors](#) share their adoption and renovation story of their K6 phone kiosk at Bearsden Cross.*

The K6, short for 'Kiosk No. 6', is the most famous phone box to date and was designed back in 1935 by British designer and architect Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. In 2008, BT launched its '[Adopt a Kiosk](#)' scheme and now thousands of phone boxes have been purchased by local authorities, registered charities and private landowners for £1 to not only retain a piece of British history and nostalgia but also to turn them into new community treasures.

Shed Secretary Hamish Livingstone said: "We adopted the K6 phone kiosk in the Bearsden shopping area with the intention of improving its appearance for our local community.

"BT do not permit putting a telephone in it again and there are thankfully plenty of defibrillators in our area so

there was no need for another one but we had other plans.

"Our members removed all of the remaining large windows before the surfaces were prepared for painting and new lighting was installed. A pink undercoat was applied—which raised a few eyebrows in the community as some thought this was to be the new colour—before the top coat—the traditional red used by BT—was then applied before the crowns were highlighted in gold.

"We have unfortunately had some paint stolen from the box and it was thrown across the road so we put an even better lock on the door and have replaced the glass with laser engraved plastic with the names and logos of local shops and businesses on them who are all supporters and have donated towards the costs of the project. The top 'Telephone' signs have also been replaced with new 'Bearsden' ones.

"Marie McNair, MSP for Clydebank and Milngavie, visited us recently and we persuaded her to randomly select the position of each contributor's window.

"It has been a popular project with our members, they even set up a 'K6 Phone Box' WhatsApp group to coordinate their progress—and has also received attention in our community and raised our profile.

"Well done to the K6 team!"



Milngavie & Bearsden Shedder Sandy who has driven the project



The finished project with new 'Bearsden' signs and company logos

# SHED PROJECTS

## Inverclyde Shed fidget boards

*Inverclyde Shed has developed some prototype 'fidget boards' aimed at older people with advanced dementia.*

The busy boards provide sensory activities for patients suffering with dementia and memory loss and can help with dexterity, fine motor skills and hand-eye co-ordination as well as reduce stress and frustration levels.

The Shed has appealed to their local community for donations to assist the project for anything from unused ironmongery hardware, bells, buzzers, switches, sockets, zips, belts, bolts, locks, remote controls, chains, castors, shackles, hooks, cable, sand timers, clear pipes, brackets, handles, taps, fabrics with interesting colours/textures, keyboards, shatterproof mirrors and sound toys!



## Dunoon Shedders are right on track for upcoming exhibition

[Dunoon Community Shed's](#) Model Railway Group has been tram-enthusiastically busy working on their exhibition for the Greenock Model Railway exhibition next month.

The members have been rewiring the layout to make it easier to operate and a new control panel has been built. Why not pop in to see it in action and/or go along to see them at the exhibition on Saturday 19th - Sunday 20th October 2024 at Lyle Kirk Formerly Ardgowan Church, 31 Union Street, Greenock, Inverclyde.



## Story-Telling Chair for Kirn Primary School

[Dunoon Community Shed](#) has lovingly-handcrafted this story-telling chair as a gift to a local school commissioned by a retiring teacher who loved her job and wanted to leave this lasting educational legacy.

The chair's purpose is to enable two people to sit together and read whether that is a teacher and a pupil, or two pupils. What a fantastic idea!

# SHED PROJECTS

## Clyde Coast & Cumbraes Shed Treasurer becomes chief detector!

*Clyde Coast & Cumbraes Shed Treasurer Mark Mair came up with a handy technique to quickly and safely check their Shed's large donated wood supply for metals to safeguard Shed members as well as their tools and machinery.*

Pallets and other scrap wood are a much-welcomed donation to most Sheds however they can often be hiding an abundance of challenging screws, studs and nails which could destroy tools and blades and even potentially cause injury.

Mark said: "To safely utilise the wood donations our Shed was receiving, I suggested we purchase a metal stud detector to check for and remove any metals prior to cutting, thinning, sanding and putting on a lathe.

"To get used to this way of working in the Shed, it is worth practicing on a piece of metal before testing a piece of wood then retest on a piece of metal to keep checking that the device is working efficiently. The device we use will pick up a wedding ring through a 75mm piece of wood so make sure when searching for nails/screws that you are well clear of anything else metal.

MSMA CEO Jason Schroeder said: "I was delighted that Mark shared this useful advice with us during my visit and that we can promote this to Sheds.

"Not only can metals hidden to the naked eye break Shed machinery and tools, but sparks, from cutting this wood on a lathe, could carry into the dust extraction system and potentially ignite a bag of saw dust. This solution is certainly one worth passing on to all Sheds and DIY enthusiasts."

**For Sheds on a tight budget, another solution is to use an earth magnet for metal detection!**



## Spey Shed's wheelchair accessible workbench

*We all strive to ensure our Men's Sheds are accessible to all and we were delighted to spot this amazing wheelchair accessible workbench created by the members of our [Shed in the Spotlight](#) this issue, [Spey Shed](#)!*

The SpeyShed members expertly made this wheelchair accessible bench whilst renovating their workshop in Grantown to ensure all of their members are able to participate in the woodworking activities at the Shed.

The Shed also fixed the broken stair lift which one of their members just simply could not access the Shed without!



# EVENTS

TOURING 18 OCT - 24 NOV 2024

# MEN DON'T TALK

Written & Directed by  
Clare Prenton

GENESIS  
THEATRE  
PRODUCTIONS



Funded by Creative Scotland Touring Fund  
Part of the Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival  
Supported by An Tobar & Mull, the Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) and Luminare  
'Men don't talk face to face, they talk shoulder to shoulder'

Three men who have never met before find banter, bird boxes and biscuits in a fictional men's shed, which celebrates camaraderie, companionship.....and custard creams. Men Don't Talk explores and explodes the myth that 'men don't talk' in Clare Prenton's poignant, hilarious and deeply moving, thought provoking play.

Written following cups of tea, cake and spirited conversations with real 'shedders', the play welcomes audiences into a friendly fictional shed, inspired by real men's stories. Presented in conjunction with the Scottish Mens Shed Association, the play has been praised in the Scottish Parliament for promoting the benefits of this growing mental health and wellbeing movement - vital in Scotland today.

## TOUR DATES

- > 18 October | Mull Theatre | Isle of Mull
- > 19 October | Bunessan Hall | Isle of Mull
- > 23 October | Lantern House Arts | Cumbernauld
- > 25 October | Heart of Hawick | Borders
- > 26 October | Eastgate Theatre | Peebles
- > 29 October | Scottish Parliament | Holyrood (this is a non public event)
- > 30 October | The Lemon Tree | Aberdeen BSL PERFORMANCE
- > 02 November | Flotta Community Centre, Flotta | Orkney (tickets on the door)
- > 03 November | Murray Community Hall, Burray | Orkney (tickets on the door)
- > 05 November | Sternness Community School | Orkney (tickets on the door)
- > 08 November | The Barn | Aberdeenshire
- > 14 November | Paisley Arts Centre | Paisley
- > 16 & 17 November | The Scottish Storytelling Centre | Edinburgh BSL PERFORMANCE 17 NOV
- > 19 November | Victoria Hall | Cromarty
- > 23 November | Bowhouse Community Centre | Grangemouth

THE CAST (Pictured right): Billy Mack as Jimmy, Greg Powrie as Tom and Dougal Lee as Ken

Find out more and how to book a venue near you at—

[www.genesis theatre productions.co.uk/men-don-t-talk](http://www.genesis theatre productions.co.uk/men-don-t-talk)

## Opportunities for Scottish Sheds

The **MDT team** is looking for Sheds to provide some Shed props to give each performance a real feel of a Shed!







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## WORKING TOGETHER

Men who are involved in Men's Sheds report living healthier, happier and more connected lives.

That's why we're committed to working together with SMSA to provide support for sheds and their members.



## DISCOVER, LEARN & CREATE

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\*Cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Excludes power tools, Laguna and Shaper. Individual members must order through their shed to receive the discount.

The SMSA acknowledges and express our sincere thanks to our partners, funders and the public for their support in 2024 for the development and growth of the SMSA and the Scottish Men's Shed Movement:



# Support the SMSA

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

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



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



**Fundraising and social media events**

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

**Legacy donation**

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

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

Follow the SMSA at

