

THE SCOTTISH SHEDDER

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE SMSA

Edition 26 | February 2022



"In Scotland, For Scotland"

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Cromwell in partnership with the Scottish Men's Sheds Association

Helping you keep your members and volunteers safe, and your shed running essential equipment that will benefit the local community.

Get on board with Cromwell and see the exciting range of products and discounts we offer to the Scottish Men's Sheds Association

Keeping Industry Working

SMSA launches new Shed member benefit through Cromwell Partnership

The SMSA is delighted to announce the process for its latest partnership with the UK's largest supplier of tools, [Cromwell](https://www.cromwell.co.uk).

Offering an unrivalled choice of products to all industries, professions and trades, Cromwell has now added Scottish Men's Sheds to the list. As a result, SMSA Shed members will receive generous discounts in line with their major customers on all product groups.

Terry Duff, Divisional Sales Manager at Cromwell, said: "We are delighted to announce this new and exciting partnership with the SMSA. We bring 50 years of experience of supporting some of the largest manufacturers in the world to keep industry working and people safe. This partnership brings a new dimension to our business and supporting your Sheds and members will bring us great satisfaction."

To find out how your Shed can set up a Cromwell account and start saving today, please visit <https://scottishmsa.org.uk/smsa-launches-new-shed-member-benefit-through-cromwell-partnership>

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 2,800 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 (April 2022) by [Friday 25th March 2022](mailto:comms@scottishmsa.org.uk). 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

Subscribe to the Scottish Shedder

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

Past issues

Archived editions available in the [SMSA online library](https://www.scottishmsa.org.uk/online-library) (log-in required)

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



TALKING SHEDS

by Jason Schroeder

Spring greetings Shedders and Shed supporters from a very beaten and blustery Aberdeenshire. The most recent storm unfortunately took out my two Polytunnels so I will be leaving the repairs until the gales and the frost are long gone.

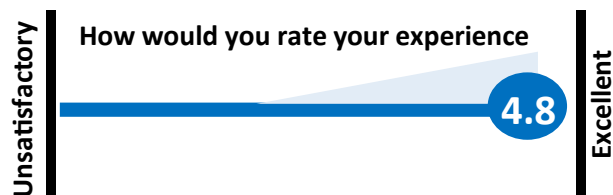
As we start hearing from the Shed Network meetings again, I can see that I am not the only one with some challenges. But at least, as the sap rises, the wheels on the Shed train are definitely moving and most have left the station. The Shed doors are open and Shedders are slowly returning from the COVID hibernation that has beset us.

Lots of fantastic news in this edition and I will start off first with some of ours which is that Tim Green—who you will know as the Age Scotland Men's Shed Development Officer—has joined us as our first dedicated SMSA Development Officer as the Age Scotland project came to an end. We will continue to work with Age Scotland as opportunity arises.

Tim will be giving you a catch-up call and not only do we look forward to meeting those who can make the Shed network meetings physically in Sheds again but he will be visiting your Shed or Shed development group, if you would like him to. So, do get in touch with him – [see page 5](#).

I was invited to present on Scottish Men's Sheds at the Cross-Party Group on the Armed Forces and Veterans Community on the 25th January which has resulted in some new contacts and joint working proposals being made. So, watch this space as we encourage veterans and service personnel to join their local sheds.

Six months ago, I was approached by [Education Scotland](#) to see if I would collaborate in an awareness raising webinar on Men's Sheds targeting Scottish teachers and community learning development workers with an invite extended to Scottish Shedders and our supporters. I am delighted to report that the event took place on the 1st February and was a resounding success with a 4.8 out of 5 rating overall through the Menti online polling tool.



If you missed the webinar 'Spotlight on Men's Sheds: The Impact on Individuals and Communities', now is your opportunity to watch the 90-minute recording, including presentations and films from the SMSA, The Inverclyde Shed and Dr Danielle Hutcheon from Glasgow Caledonian University on the [SMSA You Tube channel](#).

Our latest deal for SMSA Shed Members, through our partnership with [Cromwell](#), is now available. Shed Members can open an account with them and start receiving their top-tier discounts for all things big and small required in the Shed from PPE to big shiny tools, so do have a look at the SMSA new account process on [page 2](#) and get your Shed registered.

Another SMSA partner, the [Scottish Community Alliance](#), has been very busy with Sheds processing a flurry of 'Learning Exchange' Shed applications. Shedders are utilising this great funded opportunity to visit other Sheds and get inspiration and wisdom from others maybe further down the road than them and/or to forge new friendships in other areas. See [page 7](#) for more info.

On the topic of getting on the road again, do have a read of the amazing creativity that is Luke Winter and his Story Wagon (see [page 8](#)).

Demystifying Social Prescribing for Men's Sheds: A Cross-Nation Event

15th March 2022 10:00am-11:30am

Online Event

Lastly, there is an online cross-nation event coming up on the 15th March 2022 which is all about social prescribing and Men's Sheds. Social prescribing is a community referral. GPs, nurses and other health care professionals can refer people to a range of local non-clinical services (like Men's Sheds) to improve their health and wellbeing. I recommend you [register for your free place](#) and attend as this will definitely impact on your Shed and your existing and new members as more and more social prescribing is taking place across the globe and Sheds are seen as a very positive place for this to happen.

In advance of the event, the organisers are asking attendees (especially Shedders) to complete a small questionnaire to harvest their knowledge on social prescribing. If your Shed has experience of social prescribing, I would urge you to [complete the questionnaire](#) to share your thoughts to support the event discussions.

I look forward, with Tim, to seeing some of you soon as we once again visit Sheds, hear your stories and promote your incredible acts of community engagement, kindness and courage across Scotland.

Jason Schroeder
SMSA Executive Officer



Figures as at end of January 2022

Renewal of SMSA Shed Membership 2022/23

SMSA Shed Members will soon receive their annual invoice for membership renewal (£25) for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

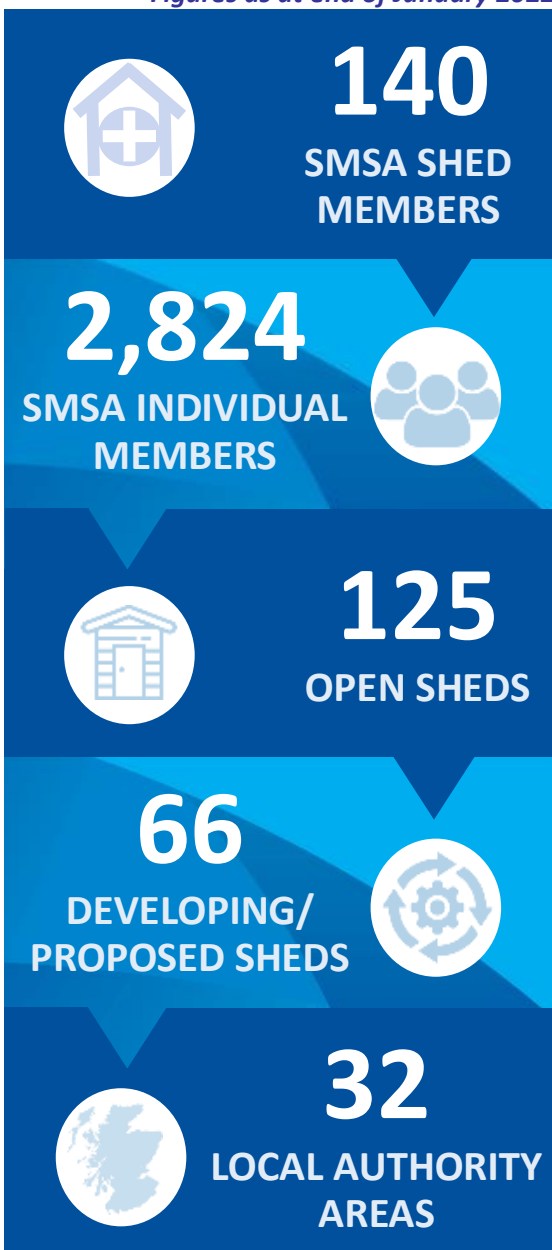
SMSA Member Sheds receive an array of exclusive membership benefits including:

- discounts from insurance partner, [Greenwood Moreland](#)
- the cheapest electricity for Sheds through business partner, [Citrus Energy Ltd](#)
- a 5% discount from [Axminster tools and machinery](#)
- discounts through the UK's largest supplier of tools, [Cromwell](#)
- discounted machine competency and health and safety training through [David Young Training](#)
- a discounted monthly fee (£30) for a Men's Shed tailored accounts package - including independent examiner's report - through [Thyme Accountants](#)
- a pathway to apply to the [Scottish Community Alliance](#) Learning Exchange grant programme for accommodation/travel costs to visit and share ideas and learn from other Men's Sheds across the country
- online access to the [Australian Men's Sheds Association's](#) Interactive Shed Manual - the quintessential guide for developing and operational Men's Sheds
- free promotion of your Shed through the [Find a Shed](#) interactive map on the SMSA website - which is viewed by over 2,500 users per month and is a great way to raise awareness of your Shed with potential new members and supporters. *Please ensure your Shed details are entered and kept up-to-date using the 'Add/Change Your Shed Map Information' form on the webpage*
- free promotion through the six-weekly '[The Scottish Shedder](#)' magazine which is sent to all Member Sheds and over 2,800 subscribers/supporters
- up to two editors on the [SMSA Shed Member Forum](#) on Facebook, allowing you to post directly e.g. gifting or selling items, requests and sharing ideas and projects with other Sheds in Scotland
- networking opportunities at the SMSA AGM and events

Please Note: The SMSA has changed its bank to the Royal Bank of Scotland. If you have a standing order please cancel it and when you receive your invoice in April set it up again. Apologies for the inconvenience.

If you have any queries regarding your Shed membership, please contact Sue Salter, Administrator on 07465 202834 or email admin@scottishmsa.org.uk

Not a Shed member? Join today at scottishmsa.org.uk/join-smsa



UPDATE YOUR DETAILS WITH THE SMSA



New email address?



Moved house?



Not sure if you are a member or not?

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

[Click here to notify the SMSA](#)



Australian Men's Shed Association



Cromwell

Tim Green joins the SMSA Team

Tim Green has spent just under seven years supporting and enabling Sheds as the Men's Sheds Community Development Officer at Age Scotland. Last month, Age Scotland's Men's Shed project came to an end and the SMSA is delighted to announce that Tim has joined its team as Development Officer.

Tim said: "I have loved every minute of my time working with Scottish Sheds. My role at Age Scotland took me to Sheds across the four corners of Scotland: Whale Firth in the north, Rhins in the south, Peterhead in the east and Dunoon in the west and I am champing at the bit to continue to support Scottish Sheds through my new role at the SMSA.

"On leaving school, I worked as a Laboratory Assistant with ICI Pharmaceuticals. From there, as a mature student I studied for my BA (Hons) degree in Social Science at Manchester Polytechnic followed by a Post Graduate Certificate in Education for further education. This took me to lecturing in health and social care, housing, social policy and sociology.

"In 2000, I came up to Scotland to undertake a Post Graduate Diploma in Multimedia Technology and at the same time achieved a Master of Education in Communication, Education and Technology at Manchester University. I then started working with Workers' Educational Association, Scotland (WEA) as a tutor in adult literacy, community education, access to further learning and trade union learning: and then I became Area Tutor Organiser for Fife, Tayside and Perth and Kinross.

"For a time, I worked at Telford College as a Skills for Success Co-ordinator and, when it merged into Edinburgh College, as a Core Skills Lecturer. The next step was returning to the WEA to take up a role as an Education Development Manager for Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders.

"Through much of my career, I have tried to engage men in community learning and development with limited success. When a post came up as Community Development Officer (Men's Sheds), I grabbed the opportunity with both hands to put this right. Here was an initiative that was enabling what I tried to facilitate over the years. A grass roots movement for men designed by Shedders for Shedders. Something, relevant and purposive, firing the imagination and creativity of men. Men were organising themselves to share and learn new skills, bring social value to their communities whilst improving their health and wellbeing.

"There is a great deal to do at this watershed moment for Men's Sheds and I can't wait to get stuck in."

Scotland at the time, to capture the significant impact Sheds were making so the Age Scotland project undertook a health and wellbeing survey and 35 oral history interviews with Shedders across Scotland. This helped in 2017 to start to populate the evidence base on the magic that goes on in Sheds or the "Shed Effect" as we called it. Academic rigour has been brought to this body of work by Glasgow Caledonian University's Sheds for Sustainable Development Project.

"Along with the SMSA, Age Scotland saw the potential of film to tell the story of Sheds and the considerable benefits they bring. After making a series of films, the Multiplying the Shed Effect Film Project equipped Galashiels, Cromarty Firth, Moffat, Dumfries and Inverclyde Men's Sheds with camera equipment, online tutorials and Zoom support meetings to tell their own story in film including their experiences of the COVID pandemic. This equipment and skills can be shared with other Sheds in their local networks.

"There is a massive need for local support to enable Sheds to make their contribution to post COVID resilience and recovery in a climate emergency. This will bring



Tim Green
SMSA Development Officer
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considerable challenges to Sheds already burdened by office bearer fatigue, unrealistic expectations of those supporting people with complex needs and securing safe and appropriate premises for sustainable lease periods at affordable rents. I look forward to continue working with well kent Shedders, Shed supporters and the Shed Networks but also with Sheds that I have not yet had the privilege of working with including new and fledgling groups.

"There is a great deal to do at this watershed moment for Men's Sheds and I can't wait to get stuck in. I will need assistance to give all Scottish Sheds the comprehensive, specialist community development support they deserve. To this end, I hope to be joined by a team of regional development workers in the not-too-distant future."

Upcoming Shed Network Meetings

Fife Men's Sheds Network
Wednesday 16th February 2022
1.30pm—3.30pm hosted by
Glenrothes Men's Shed

Perth, Kinross and Clackmannanshire Men's Shed Network
Monday 28th February 2022
11.00am—1.00pm hosted by Kinross and District Men's Shed

Highland, Islands and Moray Men's Shed Network
Friday 4th March 2022
10.30am—12.30pm hosted by
Inverness Men's Shed

[Register your interest](#)

The do's and don'ts of social media for Sheds...

Working with Sheds across the nation, the SMSA team often hear about concerns arising over Shed social media accounts.

There are so many opportunities to be gained through social media—and it should be considered as an extremely useful and positive tool—including raising awareness of your activities; sharing your latest news announcements fast; building relationships; staying connected; reaching wider audiences; targeting a younger Shed member audience and to thank/recognise funders and supporters.

That said, if your social media presence is not managed correctly it can start to cause a whole range of issues—below are some top tips for Sheds to cover some of the concerns that have been brought to our attention:

Always have more than one administrator

The SMSA often hears about Sheds having duplicate accounts/pages as login details have been misplaced/lost, or the sole administrator of the account has moved on or unfortunately passed away. Always having more than one administrator will solve this problem and ensure maintaining the accounts is not just the responsibility of one person. Social media activity can be something the whole Shed can become involved in.

Make social media a part of your day-to-day Shed activities

To maximise the potential of social media, you need to keep your audience engaged on a regular basis. Consider adding the topic to your meeting agendas as a regular item to discuss—“What posts can we share to social media this month?” “Who can take the photo at that cheque presentation next week?” “Who can advise the Facebook Administrator on the details of that community project?”

Your community and supporters (and potential new members) want to see photos/updates of what it is like in the Shed i.e. members playing cards, working on projects together...even just a photo of Bob and John having a laugh over a cup of tea! They want to see Shed life.

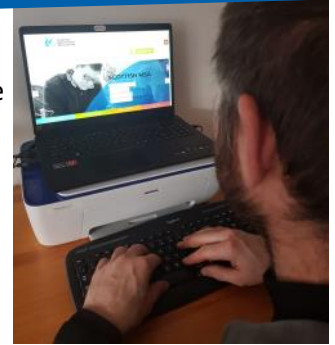
Ensure your administrators are social media savvy

Your administrators will receive all notifications of posts and comments to the page and should respond and chat to followers/subscribers in a timely, polite, respectful and professional manner. It is important to interact with your audience and think twice (and proof read) before you share/post or respond to anything in the public domain. Be informative, offer support and show empathy and kindness at all times.

Responding to negative feedback/comments

Some topics/conversations may be controversial or divisive. After all, life would be boring if we all had the same opinions however, the way comments/feedback are dealt with is extremely important. Everyone is entitled to their opinion and it is important not to ignore comments that you do not agree with or leave questions

unanswered and certainly do not ‘block’ the person because you do not like what they have to say. Respond to the person quickly in an open and transparent way, answering their query/concern and then invite them ‘offline’ to chat on the phone or in person to discuss the matter further.



Ensure administrators have the time to dedicate to social media

It is important to post regularly on your Shed news, funding successes, projects etc to keep you audience informed and engaged. Nothing is more off-putting than going to view a page that is out-of-date and not posted for a long time. When you recruit administrators, please ensure that they have the time to dedicate to this project and are fully-aware that the page will be updated regularly.

Get creative with your content

Use the platform to get the word out and showcase what you Shed has to offer—plenty of photos and videos of your facilities and your Sheddors in action. It can often be intimidating or overwhelming for someone to come along for the first time so use social media as an opportunity to give a ‘virtual tour’ of the Shed as the welcoming, friendly and inclusive environment that it is. Get creative with your content, get the members involved in the videos and photos to make updating the social media a fun task.

Recognise and promote partnerships and relationships

If your Shed works in partnership with another individual, community group or organisation—to give or receive support—take photos of the project in progress or some before and after shots, presentations or events etc and tag each other into posts to promote the initiative and recognise the support.

Record the engagement

Sheds can utilise the engagement through their social media to harvest testimonials and feedback received on projects and record and promote this information in funding applications, evaluations and impact reports.

Keep personal accounts separate

Where possible, try to keep personal social media accounts out of the loop. Try setting up a new generic account and all of your administrators can use this one account to log-in and maintain the page. This also means that notifications can be set up to come into the Shed email address instead of personal email inboxes.

And finally, change your passwords regularly

Social media accounts can unfortunately be at risk of being hacked. Keep your social media accounts safe by changing your passwords regularly (quarterly is advised) and also after an administrator leaves the role.

Need some extra advice?

Feel free to contact Michelle Wibrew, SMSA PR & Communications Officer at comms@scottishmsa.org.uk

Funds still available for Shed to Shed visits

APPLY TODAY to the Scottish Community Alliance's Learning Exchange grant program

Shed members of the SMSA qualify to apply for up to 100% of the accommodation and travel costs to learn through the exchange of ideas and the sharing of common solutions with other Men's Sheds/community groups across Scotland, through its membership agreement with the [Scottish Community Alliance's Learning Exchange grant program](#).

Amanda Cornish from the Scottish Community Alliance said: "The Community Learning Exchange is an opportunity for community groups to visit fellow organisations and learn from their experience. The programme funds travel and subsistence expenses up to £750, including a fee for the host organisation. I know that the Scottish Men's Sheds that have already taken advantage of the exchange programme have found it extremely beneficial and enjoyable! Although there is no deadline for applications, funds will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis and once they are gone, they are gone. So, don't delay, apply today."

Jason Schroeder, SMSA Executive Officer, said: "Through our partnership with the Scottish Community Alliance, SMSA Shed members have access to this fantastic opportunity to gain insight into a community which may have shared challenges and vision. There is so much to be learned from these visits and meeting people with similar interests and goals. These visits inspire groups with new ideas and solutions to take back to their own projects."



Feedback from participating groups

"We all admitted that interacting with other Sheds is something we should try to do more of! It is all too easy to stick to your own Shed but this networking and sharing of ideas is key for success."

"A thoroughly great day was had by all and we hope to return in the future."

"Several people told us it was the best study visit they'd ever been on."

"The application process was straightforward and the response swift."

Dunoon Men's Shed's learning visit to Dunbar Community Shed

Read all about Dunoon Men's Shed's recent visit to Dunbar Community Shed to share experiences and learn from each other—thanks to a £745 grant through the Scottish Community Alliance (SCA) Learning Exchange 2021/2022. [Click here to read their story](#).



How do Sheds apply?

In July 2021, the Scottish Community Alliance (SCA) announced changes to the way applications to the Community Learning Exchange are processed. The new protocol for this grant funding asks for interested parties to now make contact directly with their SCA member network—in terms of Scottish Men's Sheds, this is the SMSA—in advance of applying to ensure that the network has knowledge of the application and is willing to endorse it.

SMSA Shed members should contact Sue Salter, SMSA Administrator in the first instance at admin@scottishmsa.org.uk or call 07465 202834.



Story Wagon—coming to a Shed near you?

The Story Wagon is a touring arts space providing free creative writing, story-telling and reading facilities and activities to communities across Scotland.

The founder of Story Wagon, Luke Winter, is a writer that makes stories happen. Luke said: “I moved to London in 2013 to do freelance work and that is where I began busking with my typewriter. I started to write stories for people in the streets to make them smile.

“On my return to Scotland in early 2020, I noticed that the high street was unfortunately not as popular as it used to be so I decided to look for funding to create a ‘space’ that could pop-up in town squares and outside community centres to enable me to talk to people and let them write and share stories.

“I got in touch with Jason at the SMSA to chat about how Scottish Men’s Sheds and Sheddars could become involved with the Story Wagon project but unfortunately, the pandemic put those plans on hold.

“Making the wagon through lockdown was a brilliant experience. The wagon is the end result of so many talented and generous people. We had many craftsmen and volunteers involved in the build and utilised various types of wood including Ash to make the front doors, Douglas fir to form the back gable along with pitch pine. We also recycled and repurposed materials where possible to give them a new lease of life.

“In August 2021, we had our first-ever outing in the wagon in Skye and it has grown from there. We have been popping up all across Scotland and our travels have taken us to Castle Douglas, Edinburgh and Paisley to name but a few.

“The Story Wagon is now a sanctuary for everyone to get creative and express their stories. It is a welcoming pop-up writing den that provides desk space, cups of tea, typewriters, voice recorders, books and good old-fashioned paper and pen.

“It hosts a programme of writing, reading-out-loud and storytelling activities. Its large veranda can be unfurled to provide sheltered outdoor arts activities.



“We are excited that as part of Visit Scotland’s Year of Stories 2022—a national programme of more than 60 in-person, virtual and hybrid events—the wagon will be hitting the road to tour and are reaching out to Sheds to see if there is interest in them becoming involved in this journey.



“**Scotland’s Year of Stories 2022** will celebrate stories inspired by, written, or created in Scotland. We all have a story to tell and the wagon is here to help everyone share them with others.

“Touring will take place from the end of March until the end of October and I would love to hear if Sheds would like the wagon to ‘pop-up’ near them to see their members. Sheddars are also very welcome to join in on the Scotland’s Year of Stories events where the wagon will be featured.”

For more information on the Story Wagon and to see photos and videos from the wagon build project, please visit the website at www.storywagon.co.uk and follow its journey on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

Is your Shed interested in becoming involved in The Story Wagon Scotland tour?

Contact Luke Winter at luke@storywagon.co.uk



SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Following over a year of closure, and the Trustees taking this time to refurbish their building for post-COVID recovery, Hawick Men's Shed has now reopened and is ready to welcome new members. The SMSA chats to Shed Chairman Keith Torrington and Secretary Robert Mayhead to find out more.

Keith, who took up the post of Chairman just over a year ago, said: "As a committee, we made the decision during the pandemic to take this time to focus on making much-needed improvements to our Shed premises so that when the time came to re-open, we were better placed to welcome current members back through our doors and hopefully attract new ones.

"Founding members, including former Chairman Wilson George and former Secretary Derick Tait, were instrumental in the start-up and success of the Shed which began its journey at a workshop on Commercial Road before securing the current premises on Lothian Street through a 10-year lease from the [Scottish Borders Council](#) in 2016.

"Our Shed premises, a two-storey building and former mill and then used by the Council as Social Services offices, although structurally sound had been unoccupied for many years and required a lot of work to make it fit for purpose. A condition of the 10-year lease is that we cannot change the use of the building but we can carry out any necessary care and repair works in order to fulfil our activities.

"We are very fortunate to have so much space available to us. Following a reshuffle of our layout and a major tidy and clear out, downstairs, we now have a lobby/reception area and office to greet our members with an office and shop adjacent, two workshops, a tool store, wood store and cleaning-up area. Upstairs, there is a large meeting/social area, a small library, a jig-saw library, a second room/lounge, tea-making area and a full-size kitchen. Pre-COVID, our lounge was a hive of activity where our members liked to socialise and have a cuppa. Also on the upper floor, we also have our upholstery workshop with another three rooms for the

railway club that meets here. The [Hawick & District Railway Society](#) was founded in 1967 and their members are also members of the Shed.

"We have all worked so hard to improve the amazing space we have here. It is an old building that was in great need of an upgrade to make it safer and more comfortable for us to use. One of our biggest projects was to make the building warmer including adding insulation to the roof/attic space and replacing the heating system. The building was suffering from severe heat loss with metal framed single-glazed windows and old storage heaters. We secured £8,147 from the [National Lottery Community Fund \(NLCF\)](#) to install a new energy-efficient electric heating system; our new radiators went in just before Christmas and we are hoping this will make a huge difference to our energy bills and the comfort levels for members, especially in the winter months.

"For the heating upgrade, we applied to four different funders and advised the other funders when we were successful with the NLCF. Thankfully, the [People's Postcode Lottery](#) had already committed to allocate the funds but this will now be put towards our double glazing. We are also hopeful about discussions with a third funder ([The Riada Trust](#)) to allow us to re-assign the funds towards the windows but at the time of writing, this has not yet been formally approved.

Continued on next page...



SHED IN THE SPOTLIGHT (Continued)

...continued from previous page

“We received a quote of £11,000 for new double-glazing panes for the inside of each window whilst retaining the original exterior single-glazed ones. We will save money by fitting these ourselves and have a local company on speed dial that is willing to support us with advice and guidance on how to do this if we encounter any problems.

“We approached Muirhall Energy (who are setting up a new Windfarm facility in Teviotdale), the officials there gave us a grant of £2,000 that enabled us to upgrade our old electric fuse boards, replace the old smoke alarms and install new fire extinguishers too – all ensuring that the safety of our members is of the utmost priority.

“Over time, we have also changed all of the lights to LED’s, thanks to a grant from [Hawick Community Council](#), to make them more environmentally-friendly and this has also improved the light levels in the workshops immensely and will result in cost savings in the long-term. Solar panels are an item on our wish list that we would also like to explore down the line.

“A local man kindly donated a stair lift to our Shed which belonged to his mother. This was a very important project to us to ensure our upstairs offering was accessible to all. We paid for the uplift, adaptation and installation of the stair lift which in the long-term saved us thousands of pounds on the cost of a new one.

“Like all Sheds, the pandemic has severely restricted our activities. Since our inception, the Shed has always been so involved in many projects in the community including the refurbishment of café furniture for Johnsons of Elgin, recovering seating for the Camera Club, display racks for a local knitwear retailer, planters on the high street, planters for a veterans’ café and schools, wheelchair access to the high school and sign-writing classes for local young people to name but a few.

“Our Shed also attended the Hawick Fair and Hawick Christmas Fair in 2021. These events and activities were crucial to not only sell our wares but to raise awareness of the Shed and what it has to offer. We are looking forward to getting out there again and promoting our activities to potential new members.

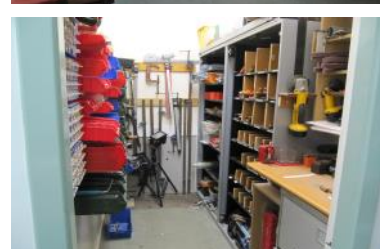
“We are fortunate to have a great relationship with our local council. We receive referrals through them and have recently received two new ones and will invite them both along soon to have a tour of the facilities and see if it is for them.

“Currently, I would say that a third of our 60+ members are under the age of 60 and with our latest recruitment drive, we are hopeful to attract more younger members along to the Shed too. Future plans include the potential to add a chess group, cribbage group, board games, a music group for young people and also convert one of our workshops into a model making area. Discussions have also taken place with John Spiteri, Local Area Co-ordinator at Scottish Borders Council, regarding the potential for a new film group for young people with additional support needs.

“Pre-COVID, we also had plans to utilise our large kitchen and have some basic cooking lessons for members so this is definitely something we would like to get going with sooner rather than later. We have also previously discussed starting up a ‘Fruit Club’ to share growing tips and recipes for wine making, pies, jams and so on so there is no shortage of ideas on how we can expand our activities. These decisions will, of course, all be member-led to meet their needs.

“It has been a tough old year, getting the Shed ready for our return but what keeps us all going, and feeling so passionate about it all, is seeing the difference it makes to members’ lives. One of our founding members, Tam Dagg who unfortunately passed away in November, used to always say that following his early retirement after 38 years of working in the same job, that he felt lost until his daughter pointed him in the direction of the Shed. After that, there was no stopping Tam coming to the Shed almost every day it was open – he was the first person to ever walk through the door five years ago - and he made sure to really maximise every opportunity available to him at the Shed and made a whole new circle of friends.”

Hawick Men’s Shed has reopened its doors Monday to Friday, 10am to 3pm at 7 Lothian Street. For more information, call 01450 219281 (voicemail for out of hours), email hawick.shed@gmail.com and follow their journey on Facebook at www.facebook.com/Hawick-Mens-Shed-107009380774489





Kirkmuirhill and Blackwood Men's Shed holds Breakfast with Santa event with a little help from 'Elf'n and Sefty'

Kirkmuirhill and Blackwood Men's Shed (KBMS), along with its partner Thornton Road Community Centre, organised a very successful Breakfast with Santa event on Saturday 11th December 2021.

KBMS Chairman, Alan Watson, said: "Due to Covid regulations, attendees were all pre-registered to ensure strict social distancing and cleaning regimes were adhered to at all times.

"Separate sessions were held and we managed to give 38 children the opportunity to meet Santa in person. The event was held in the local community centre and then the children were invited to visit the Shed, which is located just behind the venue.

"We turned one of our workshops into a Grotto where Santa met the children and gave them all a small gift and the other workshop was given an overhaul and made to look like a toy workshop, with Elf'n and Sefty manning the workshop.

"Thanks to the support received from local businesses and some large retail organisations, we were able to offer this as a FREE event to our community. The feedback from parents and the children was extremely positive and we look forward to holding the event next year (if Covid regulations allow).

"This was our second Breakfast with Santa event and the experience gained every year makes us want the event to only get bigger and better each time. A special thanks must go to all our volunteers who made the event possible and especially Santa for visiting us on the day."

This isn't the only project that the Shed has been involved with recently to benefit children and young people, KBMS has been busy making prop boxes for the drama department at Lesmahagow High School and also built a sand pit box for Bent Primary School (both pictured right).

Follow KBMS on Facebook at www.facebook.com/groups/1765638216876323



Bothwell and Uddingston Men's Shed gets top level cash boost from Council

Bothwell and Uddingston Men's Shed has been given a bumper boost of £1,500 from South Lanarkshire Council towards its start-up costs.

The announcement, made at the Hamilton Area Committee meeting in mid-November, saw the new Shed receive the full amount that they applied for (£1,500) to give them a good kickstart as opposed to the traditional £250 grant usually offered as a start-up grant for community groups from the local authority.

Follow the Shed's journey at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/327191121761079>



Potential delay in official opening of Carluke Men's Shed

Following the immense progress made at Carluke Men's Shed in preparation for their official opening, reported in the [Dec 2021 issue of The Scottish Shedder](#), the Shed has since been forced to cancel its regular Friday 'blether/get together' at the Carluke Leisure Centre in light of the rise in COVID-19/Omicron cases.

The Carluke Sheddors have returned to keeping in touch through email and phone again to keep up momentum as they strive to get the Shed ready for an official opening in the coming weeks.

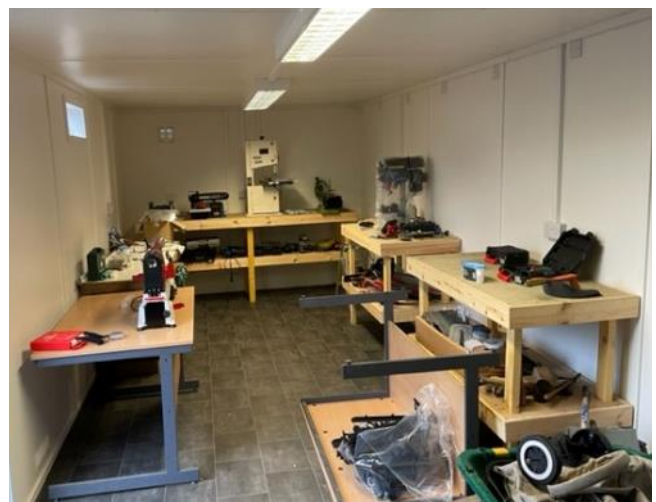
On behalf of the rest of the Shed Committee, Treasurer Tom Kennedy said: "To keep everyone safe, we had to make the decision to cancel our weekly 'blethers/get-togethers' as well as postpone our Christmas celebrations on the 17th December however, we still intend to hold some kind of party as soon as we can to make-up for it.

"Our physical meetings mean the world to our members and we were making so much progress so were saddened to close our doors yet again. Over the last few months, being at the Shed site and working towards a common goal has been so enjoyable and really spurred us on.

"Since deciding to temporarily stop our physical meetings, we have ensured that all members are kept informed on progress through a weekly email on a Thursday and a phone call to those that do not have email. We are reviewing the situation on a weekly basis and hope to return as soon as we can.

"Although this has slowed down progress somewhat, we are still trying to get the remaining jobs completed albeit from a distance. We have measured up and are in the process of procuring the necessary wood for our ramps to make the Shed fully accessible for wheelchairs. We should also have our defibrillator and cabinet installed later this month to be ready for opening when it is safe to do so. We are discussing this with the Carluke Development Trust (CDT), when we can meet with them and the architects of the High Mill site where our two portable cabins are still currently located."

Follow Carluke Men's Shed at www.facebook.com/groups/1077129169396971



Finechty Men's Shed makes storytelling donation to local school and nursery

Finechty Men's Shed presented some unique reading chairs and a mud kitchen—all made from recycled materials—to its local school and nursery at its fundraising coffee morning in their village hall.

Shed Chairman, Jimmy Bremner, said: "The wife of our Shed Secretary works at a primary school in Keith and mentioned that the school was looking to purchase storytelling equipment but were surprised by the cost of these items. Our Shed decided to make the chairs for them and also for our local school too.

"Our Shed is just over 18 months old now and the pandemic has halted much of our progress. In the future, as we make our premises at the Sunny Craig our permanent home, we plan to make wigwams and some other creative items to inspire more imaginative play for the pupils."

Follow the Shed's journey at www.facebook.com/findochty1



Garnock Valley Men's Shed cleans up with recent wishlist donation

Garnock Valley Men's Shed (GVMS) has received a commercial dishwasher for its Shed through a community benefits scheme.

The donation, from Glasgow-based contact centre go-centric, was made through the [NHS Scotland Procurement Community Benefit Gateway Portal](#).

The Community Benefit Gateway is a free and easy to use online service that connects NHS Scotland suppliers with third sector community organisations across Scotland. In collaboration with Public Health Scotland, the Gateway helps improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of local areas and assists in the reduction of health inequalities across Scotland. Its purpose is to establish positive relationships between appropriate suppliers and third sector community organisations through the fulfilment of community needs.

Shed Treasurer David Gardner said: "Through the simple website application process, third sector organisations can list their wish/need which could be anything from financial, materials, food, IT equipment, volunteers time or sponsorship support.

"I put on our request for a dishwasher. We were of the opinion—if you don't ask, you don't get and it was definitely worth a try. We submitted the request on the Friday and were gobsmacked to be offered a brand new dishwasher just a few days later from [go-centric](#) to support our Shed activities and I am delighted to say that it was installed in January and will be well-used now our Shed doors are open once again."

go-centric is a dynamic contact centre based in the heart of Glasgow's city centre, with teams across Scotland and the UK. The organisation, which has more than 20 years of experience, operates in both the public and private sectors and has played a key role in COVID vaccination and contact tracing support across the UK.

Kelly Arrol, Chief Operating Officer of go-centric, said: "We were delighted to support Garnock Valley Men's Shed with their request. The team at go-centric are proud of being a people-centred business—delivering a series of charitable initiatives, investing in the workforce with wellbeing and development programmes, and securing Real Living Wage, Youth Verified and Disability Confident accreditation.

"We hope this new dishwasher will make a real difference to the Shed and its members."



Auchterarder and District Men's Shed benefits from discounted machine competency training through SMSA partnership

Auchterarder and District Men's Shed is one of three Scottish Men's Sheds to benefit from a further discount on the Machine Competence and Woodwork training offered through SMSA partner, [David Young Training](#).

SMSA Executive Officer, Jason Schroeder, said: "Since 2019, the Association has worked with our partner David Young Training, who has over 20 years' experience of delivering on-site woodwork training, to offer discounted and bespoke training to suit the individual training needs of Scottish Men's Sheds as an [SMSA membership benefit](#)."

"Last August, we were delighted to promote a special reopening training deal for SMSA Shed Members at a discounted rate of £290 to the first few Sheds that applied—with a low bank balance—to encourage them to reopen their doors safely again following a long period of closure as a result of the pandemic."

Shed Secretary John Boyd said: "On the 19th January 2022, I was accompanied by fellow members Tim Hickey, Stewart Scrimgeour and Andrew Bruce for the training which commenced at 10am and finished at 4pm at David Young's base at Garden Cottage, Fingask Castle, Rait in Perthshire."

"This was a comprehensive day of training during which David Young used his skills and experience to explain how to set up, maintain and use several of the pieces of equipment which are commonly used in most Sheds. The importance of adequate safety measures and pre-inspection of equipment were explained before any item is used."

"A band saw was stripped down and inspected, cleaned and the important pieces relating to the correct set up of the blade explained. This included how to replace a blade. Similar instruction was given on the use of chop saws, power tools and the use of a wood lathe. Hands on use allowed the Sheddiers to increase their confidence in using the tools in a safe way, which we can then pass on to our own Sheddiers who may wish to use our equipment."



Not yet an SMSA Shed Member?

Click here to find out more and join today!



"Our Sheddiers all agreed that this was a valuable and beneficial day of training and we would like to thank David Young for his knowledge and experience which he passed on to us. We would also like to thank the Scottish Men's Sheds Association for the grant which enabled us to participate in this training day. The knowledge gained will be passed on to our other Shed members."

Scottish Men's Sheds that are members of the SMSA can access machine competency, woodwork and health and safety training for up to eight Shed members at discounted prices (£638).

For more information or to book your training day, please visit www.davidyoungtraining.co.uk

Scottish Land Fund boost brings new Community Shed plans one step closer

New SMSA Shed Member, the [Woolfords, Auchengray and Tarbrax Improvement Foundation \(WAT IF?\)](#), has had plans afoot to develop a new Community Shed for the last few years following consultation with the community. The WAT IF? team has since received some Shed-tastic news, just before Christmas, that will now bring this dream to fruition for their thriving community.

Thanks to the [Scottish Land Fund](#), a small farm in South Lanarkshire on the edge of the Pentland Hills will now be purchased by WAT IF? to benefit the local community. Part of their ambitious plans for the site include the development of a new Community Shed to meet the demand in the area.

Stephanie Plotnikoff, WAT IF? Project Officer, said: "The need for a Shed in the area was initially raised some years ago and something that our Trust has been working on and keen to achieve. A community consultation began in June last year with a few public meetings taking place and excitement brewing.

"As a community, our initial thoughts were to start out with a portacabin/shipping container transformed into a Shed site in the grounds of Tarbrax Village Hall however, just before Christmas we received the phenomenal news that our application to the Scottish Land Fund had been successful. We were absolutely thrilled with the announcement.

"This opened up so many possibilities as this funding will enable WAT IF? to purchase Loanhead Farm near Tarbrax comprising of 24 acres, a farmhouse and a variety of pre-established agricultural buildings. The location is also ideal as it is more central for the majority of our local residents.

"In addition to the Shed, this long-term project will enable the local community to develop various projects including a shop, café, community workshop, paths, a play area for children, allotments, camping pods as well as a community growing project. Alongside, the shop and café, the Shed is one of our top priorities to get up and running first. Further consultation with the local community will also take place to explore other opportunities for this exciting multi-use community project."

WAT IF? was established as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) in November 2012 and was formed by a group of local residents to help to improve the villages and surrounding areas and the quality of life for residents. Patricia Mavor, WAT IF? Development Manager, said: "We are absolutely delighted that the Scottish Land Fund has granted the

"This project can help us respond to our community's needs by providing the land and buildings where we can further develop activities and services to help meet the challenges ahead."



financial support to purchase Loanhead. This offers our community the opportunity to develop a project for many generations to come and will help us realise our vision to provide a beautiful, safe and vibrant place with a resilient, well-connected and resourceful community offering a great quality of life for all local people.

"This project can help us respond to our community's needs by providing the land and buildings where we can further develop activities and services to help meet the challenges ahead."

Minister for Environment and Land Reform, Mairi McAllan, said: "It's great to see such a diverse range of projects benefit from the support of the Scottish Land Fund. Thanks to this fund, communities all across Scotland are taking ownership of the land and buildings that matter to them.

"These grants are a vote of confidence in the future of communities and the projects they undertake. They are also a tribute to the hard work and resilience of the many people who have given up their time for the common good. I look forward to seeing these projects flourish."

Cara Gillespie, Scottish Land Fund Committee Chair said: "From places where people can come together, space to get outdoors and vital facilities such as shops and land for affordable housing, the Scottish Land Fund is once again giving local groups the resources they need in order to strengthen their own communities."

Sandra Holmes, Head of Community Assets at HIE, said: "These diverse projects are all fantastic examples of people taking control of local resources for the long-term benefit of communities. Ownership will give communities greater control over important assets that will reap rewards for people now and for generations to come. We wish all the successful groups the very best in their new ventures."

For more information about WAT IF?, visit their website at <https://watif.scot> and follow them on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). You can also join their new [WAT IF? Hobbies & Leisure Facebook page](#).



Stanley & District Men's Shed signs 15-year lease with Historic Environment Scotland

Christmas came early for Stanley & District Men's Shed as they marked a momentous day by signing a 15-year lease with [Historic Environment Scotland](#) on the 2nd December 2021.

Shed Chairman Alex Cockburn said: "After almost two years of negotiations, we are absolutely delighted to sign this lease. This is a huge step in our Shed journey, not only giving us a long-term vision but it will also allow us to progress and expand our work in the community orchard at Stanley Mills and plant 120 trees.

"Our members initially began meeting at our village bowling club before moving on to the East Lodge of Stanley Mills in October 2018. The idea to create the orchard came from the [Stanley Development Trust](#) and we have planted over 70 trees already including varieties of apple, pear, cherry and quince."



The Shed received another gift in the form of a Christmas meal for the Stanley & District Shedders to celebrate the festive season and their lease news together. Local business owner Pete Chan, of China China Takeaway in Craigue in Perth, donated and hand-delivered the food for the members to enjoy on the 14th December.

The Shed meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10am and 4pm and the first Saturday of every month (10am to 2pm) and offers the opportunity for members to socialise, get involved with woodwork and metalwork and develop their computer and 3D printing skills. As their membership grows, they hope to increase their opening hours to include an evening offering to offer the opportunity for even more men to attend.

For more updates from the Stanley & District Men's Shed, follow them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/stanley.mensshed.1 or visit their website at www.stanleymen.org



Dumfries Men's Shed teams up with local family to provide Christmas food parcels

Dumfries Men's Shed was proud to support a local family, the Vann-Wakelin's, to help deliver food parcels for the Christmas week to 150 families across Dumfries and Galloway.

Last December, local man Lee Vann-Wakelin helped several families struggling to put Christmas dinner on the table and this year, he pledged to help to even more. The ambitious target was raised to support 150 families to feed their families for a week over the festive period including a full Christmas dinner on Christmas day.

Cameron Kerr from Dumfries Mens Shed said: "Our Shed was delighted to be a part of this amazing initiative to support local families in need at Christmas.

"The Vann-Wakelin family wanted to supply the food parcels containing meals to cover seven days to families who needed it most. In August 2021, Lee and his family reached out to us asking if we could assist them in their Christmas Week Food Gesture 2021 and we were more than happy to get involved.

"We promoted the initiative through our community and supplied a room at the Shed to store the food donations and offered members of the public the ability to donate goods directly to us for the cause.

"Lee is now working on the [Easter Egg Gesture 2022](#) and we have once again offered to help and offer a storage space for all their donations. This year, they are hoping to get 3,000 easter eggs."

Lee said: "Last Christmas, my wife Louisa and I privately made up five family Christmas dinner hampers for families struggling because of redundancies and/or being furloughed.

"Then, at Easter, we managed to blast through our easter egg target of 1,500 and achieved over 2,200 easter eggs. I have been absolutely delighted with the response from the community—so many people are keen to get involved and happy to help. These boxes have taken so much pressure off families.

"With the help of Dumfries Men's Shed, which acted as a collection point as well as our main storage point, we firstly asked for the dried and canned ingredients for each recipe and then just before the food parcels went out we arranged for all the fresh ingredients to be delivered."

For more information about Dumfries Men's Shed, please visit their website at www.dumfriesmensshed.com and follow them on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).



Garnock Valley Men's Shed receives donation from local crematorium

Garnock Valley Men's Shed has received a very generous donation of £1,000 from its local crematorium, [Clyde Coast and Garnock Valley Crematorium](#).

David Gardner, Treasurer of GVMS, said: "On Friday 12th November 2021, we received an email from our local crematorium saying that they wished to make a donation to our Shed. We immediately contacted the telephone number on the email and spoke with the Crematorium Manager, Jennifer Hamilton, who assured us that it was a genuine offer and that we would be receiving £1,000.

"I was delighted to meet with Jennifer and be presented with the cheque. This donation is very much appreciated by all the members of Garnock Valley Men's Shed who would like to thank Jennifer and her staff for their support."

Jennifer Hamilton said: "We had four amounts of £1,000 to donate in December and wanted to share the funds amongst our local charities. The money came from donations that were left by mourners at services for which there was no formal collection requested by the families. We match fund the amount donated and so we were delighted at the amount we were able to share locally.

"We wanted to support charities that help people who are bereaved or just generally struggling in these dreadful COVID days. Garnock Valley Men's Shed is our local Shed and I became aware of it because there was a lot of social media activity at the time to see if the men



of Largs would be interested in a new Men's Shed. GVMS was tagged into the posts and the excellent work that they do was clear for everyone to see.

"It was great to meet with David. His enthusiasm for the projects that the Men's Shed is involved in is incredible. We have actually suggested to a bereaved husband recently that he pop in to the Shed for some company as I just know that he would benefit from being around other men and have the opportunity to speak to people who will not judge him if he gets emotional or sad. I'm so glad we are now more aware of everything that the Shed has to offer. The Garnock Valley is lucky to have it!

"Everything we do at Clyde Coast and Garnock Valley Crematorium has our core values of care, compassion, kindness and community at its heart, and everyone involved in GVMS share these values and live by them every day. Communities thrive when people come together to share their experiences and for men to have a safe and special place to meet and have a friendly cuppa is invaluable. That's what the Men's Shed provides and we are proud to be able to support it."

Follow GVMS on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GVMShed

Glenrothes Men's Shed gifts outdoor learning aids to local school

Pupils from Carleton Primary School in Glenrothes received a lovely surprise from Glenrothes Mens Shed in the form of mud kitchens and hedgehog houses to boost their learning and development.

Trustee Mick Strefford spent weeks creating the mud kitchens at the Shed just before Christmas. Mick said: "Mud kitchens are not just about getting messy and having fun. They are extremely useful tools to develop fine motor skills and aid social engagement, role play, exploration, creativity and imagination. The children soon got to work to make their first 'meal'—a nice mud pie for Santa with a carrot on top for Rudolf!

"The Primary 2 pupils also wrote some lovely letters of appreciation for hedgehog houses we had also made for them. They had lots of fun placing them in the surrounding woods and gardens ready for the hedgehogs to move in for the winter."

Follow Glenrothes Men's Shed at www.facebook.com/glenrothesmensshed





Aberchirder & District Men's Shed spreads festive cheer in the community following Storm Arwen

Aberchirder & District Men's Shed, along with their local community association, held a Christmas Open Day on Saturday 19th December which featured carol singing around the Christmas tree in the community garden, a Santa's grotto, roasted chestnuts and marshmallows and singing with local singer Adele Henderson.

New Shed Chairman, James Paterson said: "Following the devastation caused by Storm Arwen, it was great to get the local community together at Christmas. We were also delighted to welcome pupils from Aberchirder Primary School to our Santa's Grotto and the young people received a book (donated by the school) and a small gift. We had separate sessions to accommodate six classes over a two-day period.

"Our Shed also teamed up with Foggie Fire Station to contact Santa's Team and organise a lift in the fire engine for the man in red to officially open the local Christmas market and grotto in the village square on Saturday 4th December."

The Shed has also been busy with new initiatives. For members of the community missing their library, the

Shed is now a place for people to come and access the entire Aberdeenshire Library catalogue and order for click and collect.

The Shed is offering this support service every Tuesday 1.30pm—4.30pm or at other times by arrangement. There is also an opportunity to sign up for computer classes at the Shed on Tuesday afternoons with help available to get people online.

Former Chairman Mike O'Brien, who recently stood down and handed over the reins to James Paterson, has also recently presented on the topic of Men's Sheds at the Scottish Women's Royal Institute (SWRI) at Cornhill which went down a treat. As a result, Mike has been invited to do the same to the Aberchirder WRI and the Banff Ladies Club.

Keep updated on news from Aberchirder & District Men's Shed by following them on their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/groups/1674331272826769



A PERSONAL STORY



The SMSA chats to Henry Johnson, founding member of Garnock Valley Men's Shed (GVMS) and Chairman since its inception in 2018. At 77 years young, Henry recently announced that—after four years at the helm—he plans to step down as Chair at the next AGM.

Henry said: "I have three sons and three grandsons in Australia and, pre-Covid, I visited them at least every two years. It was there, in rural Victoria, that I first heard about Men's Sheds—not knowing at that time that some had already popped up across Scotland.

"Well, I thought that Men's Sheds were an amazing concept and would be in high demand in my community back home. At the time, I was a trustee of [Project Kilbirnie](#)—aimed at revitalising one of the three small towns in the Garnock Valley—and I put the notion to my fellow trustees on my return. They were excited by the idea and we very quickly got to work to follow it through.

"Unlike many developing Sheds, we found premises first before calling a public meeting. We were extremely fortunate that North Ayrshire Council offered us use of a semi-derelict building in our local park to get us up and running.

"As the first Shed to start-up in the area, we have always had, and continue to have, an excellent relationship with the council—largely through our local Community Development Officer, Stewart Beck. We have deliberately cultivated and maintained good relationships with all of our local politicians at all levels and of all parties and none, kept them informed and invited them to get involved in our work. This has been key to our success.

"There was a great buzz at the inaugural meeting, held in the rundown building we had been offered for use. There were around a dozen enthusiastic men in attendance including David Gardner who was so taken by the potential of Sheds that he is now Chairman of the SMSA. We quickly got a committee together and obtained charitable status in May 2018.

"We soon discovered that there were other Sheds up and running across the country. We got a grant from the [Scottish Community Alliance's Learning Exchange Programme](#) and used it to visit Sheds in Barrhead (our nearest neighbour), the Wee County, Westhill and Inverurie to 'steal' ideas from them. After all, there is no point in reinventing wheels when a tried and tested model works well. We remain grateful to these other Sheds. In the course of these visits, we found out about the SMSA and joined as a subscribing Shed member. We have received splendid support and guidance there.

"We were overwhelmed by very generous support from local people and businesses and we successfully approached national funders. We've raised around £80,000 in total since we set up and used it to vastly improve the interior and exterior of our building and to kit it out for our member-led activities. There was a lot to do. We had resident rodents, the internal walls were black with damp, the roof leaked and we had no water supply or toilet facilities. But for us, 'the Shed' was not so much about a building as about a group of men getting together and working towards a shared vision. Seeing these guys transform a 'hovel' into a much-valued community asset was a brilliant project to be a part of.

"Our building is situated in a public park and is at risk of vandalism - or worse. So, an early priority was to make it secure by installing alarm systems, security fencing and anti-climb paint. We even have security cameras that not only record external activity but are linked to my own and David's phones so that we can check on the building at any time.

"I am not your stereotypical Shedder. I'm legally responsible for health and safety so I've never dared to use any of the machinery in the workshop. My only useful 'tool' has been my laptop keyboard. I was a mid-ranking civil servant before I retired and I have used skills developed then by completing many a funding application, writing many a begging letter and composing, with pleasure, the occasional letter of thanks.

Continued on next page...

A PERSONAL STORY (CONTINUED)



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“I was thoroughly bored at times after I retired. I’d suffered, as many retirees do, a huge loss of mental stimulation. My Shed activities have certainly filled this gap. I go to the Shed for a while most Tuesdays and Thursdays if only to have a blether with the guys. Thanks to the Shed, I now have a much wider group of friends. Friends for life.

“The Shed has given me a renewed sense of purpose and fulfilment. I enjoy watching previously isolated men—some unemployed, redundant, retired, divorced, bereaved and in recovery - blossom into active Sheddors. One of the many highlights for me was watching a group of GVMS Sheddors help improve a community garden in the local village of Barrmill. Seeing these guys working together as a team to create a gorgeous shrubbery out of nothing is something I’ll always remember.

“The lengthy COVID closure of the Shed was not only a setback to our progress but tragically, we also lost one of our trustees to the virus. We kept in touch with as many Sheddors as we could including via Zoom and through several remotely organised events but it wasn’t the same as running an active Shed. Our immediate priorities, now that we have reopened, are to attract members back and to extend a warm invitation for new members to join us. The pace of returning to active shedding is however slow. Some vulnerable members are understandably still hesitant but we will be there when they are ready.

“We have accumulated funds during lockdown to make further improvements to the Shed building, including

installing heating and insulation. We will work on this in readiness for next winter and then develop a chunk of space which we use only for storage at the moment. Something SMSA’s Jason Schroeder said at a training day he held for us early on has always stuck with me - ‘A Men’s Shed is not just a workshop’. For some men, a workshop area can actually be unwelcoming. So, with that in mind, I envisage creating a cosy social area with comfy seats and tables for games to attract members who only want to sit and banter and have a cup of tea or a game of dominoes.

“It has been fantastic being a part of this journey over the last four years. It’s been challenging at times with many highs and occasional lows but I am immensely proud of what our Sheddors have achieved and it is only going to continue. It has also been a privilege to support other emerging Sheds in our part of the country, to help set up the Ayrshire Men’s Shed Network and to encourage the growth of the Men’s Shed movement. We are close to finalising our 25-year Community Asset Transfer lease of our restored building which has been much delayed by Covid. We should reach that landmark soon so that GVMS can be around for the generation after mine.

“When I step down later this year, I’ll be very wary to avoid boredom reappearing. I will of course still be involved with the Shed in some way or another. The guys might even let me stay on as a trustee. But I think the time is right for me to take a back seat—I’ve got two continents still to visit and a lot left on my bucket list.”

Follow Garnock Valley Men’s Shed at
www.facebook.com/GVMShed

'THE SHED GARDEN'



The SMSA chats to Trellis, a charity that shares know-how about therapeutic gardening, the art of using gardening to help people take care of their physical and mental wellbeing.

Fiona Thackeray, Head of Operations & Development at Trellis, said: "Trellis supports a network of over 480 therapeutic gardening projects, helping them share skills, good practice and get connected. These projects each help an average of 25 people which means 12,000 people benefit from therapeutic gardening each week.

"We run training courses, inspirational demo sessions (including live online events) and an information service and can visit people on site to give help and advice. Our charity also supports research and development in therapeutic gardening and make sure that the voice of gardening groups is heard by policy makers.

"Though it's unlikely that any Sheddors need convincing, there's now a formidable evidence base testifying to the health benefits of gardening and gardens. From helping people recover from surgery or depression to reducing pain, stress and anger, having gardens and plants in our lives seems to improve our wellbeing in lots of different ways.

"Therapeutic groups use this evidence to guide their work and harness the benefits of gardening to help people to help themselves. Practitioners who run therapeutic gardening services come from all walks of life—they may be good gardeners who have learned how to use planting activities to help a particular group get healthier, or nurses or prison officers who bring a love of gardening into their professional lives to benefit the people they work with.

"Being a crossover field of work that combines health and care skills with horticulture, it's common for people to have gaps in their skills. So, we provide tailored training courses to help plug these gaps.

"Our Seasonal Activity Ideas courses take each season in turn, providing a stack of ideas for things to do in the garden, all year round, adapted to the needs of people living with all kinds of health conditions. We have a free taster course for anyone wanting to dip their toe in the water of Seasonal Gardening ideas. Take a look at www.trellisscotland.org.uk/content/training and there

are also lots of videos from previous learning events on our [YouTube Channel](#).

"We run a series of free Live Zoom and Growing Series events (also on [YouTube](#) if you can't make the live broadcast). These are free learning sessions designed to inspire people to try their hand at all kinds of garden activities, or related craft ideas, from water features to fruit growing and wildflowers.

"We'll line up further dates from April/May onwards. Meanwhile, our [online Seminar Series](#) is a week-long event from 7-11 March 2022 showcasing therapeutic gardening initiatives from around the world including Australia, Belgium and Iraq as well as some great home-grown projects.

"These seminars are free and open for bookings now on our [website](#). Our aim is to bring people together, so do get in touch, we'd love to hear from you!"

Feedback from participants:

"I very much enjoy the workshops and learn a lot from Trellis and the contributing participants. The highlight for me was the Spring 2021 series showcasing work from other countries including the remarkable Daniela Silva Rodriguez Bonazzi and her Healing Garden in Lima and Natalie McCall's Sanctuary Garden in Scotland. It would be wonderful to do another series featuring more inspiring therapeutic gardening/horticulture from all around the world."

"I would like to thank the Trellis team and all the participants for a brilliant and inspiring week, a lantern of hope of what has been a difficult 12 months for many."



SHED PROJECTS

Stonehaven Men's Shed ships 400 prosthetic limbs in latest Legs4Africa project consignment

On Sunday 22nd January 2022, another consignment of parts salvaged from used prosthetic limbs was collected from Stonehaven & District Men's Shed for shipment to Africa as part of the Legs4Africa project.

The [Legs4Africa](https://www.legs4africa.org) charity aims to recycle prosthetic legs and facilitate support groups so amputees in sub-Saharan Africa can live more independent, fulfilled lives. Bill Allan, Shed Chairman, said: "These prosthetic limbs would normally be sent to landfill however, now they are collected from hospitals all across Scotland from Dumfries to Inverness by the Rotary Club of Stonehaven and delivered to our Shed where they are dismantled by Shedders to separate out their more valuable parts.

"These parts are then collected by the Bristol based charity, Legs4Africa, and delivered to Senegal, the Gambia, Tanzania and other sub-Saharan countries for re-assembly by trained locals to fit children or adults who need them to fulfil their lives."

This latest consignment is the result of two years of collaboration between the Men's Shed, the Rotary and Scottish hospitals. It contains over 400 parts consisting of knee and ankle joints and the connectors between them, knee/thigh attachment cups and feet of a range of sizes.

Shedders, Willie Shepherd and Doug Johnson have achieved great satisfaction in the challenge of dismantling the legs and have managed to get it down to a fine art.

Since 2014, parts to enable the rebuilding of over 10,000 prostheses in Africa have been shipped by Legs4Africa and the two Stonehaven groups are proud of the part they have played in this.

For more updates from Stonehaven & District Men's Shed, visit their website at www.stonehavenmensshed.co.uk and follow them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/Stonehaven-Mens-Shed-1095753717148589

Read all about the Legs4Africa charity at www.legs4africa.org



SHED PROJECTS

Shed gifts rocking horse to Dr Dani Hutcheon's son

Whilst visiting [Barrhead Men's Shed](#) in East Renfrewshire in 2019, as part of [Glasgow Caledonian University's Sheds for Sustainable Development Project](#), Dr Danielle Hutcheon admired the lovely wooden toys that they were making.

Dani said: "I was pregnant with my son at the time and the rocking horses really caught my eye. Little did I know that Jim from the Shed started to make one for my son Arthur who wasn't even born yet.

"The project was delayed due to COVID and Shed closures but two years on, they surprised me with the most beautiful rocking horse for my son. The workmanship is just beautiful, they even added his name on the front. My son is now 2 and the horse is just the perfect size. He absolutely loves it and I'm so thankful to Jim and the Shed for their ongoing generosity."



The Blairmore Bike aims to crackdown on speeding

Concerned with the speed of some drivers along the A880 Dunoon to Ardentenny road, [Dunoon Men's Shed](#) member, Bill Murphy took action to make speeders think twice.

Bill said: "My wife, Fiona, and I wanted to create something that would make motorists more aware of the speed limit in the area to keep pedestrians in our community safe.

"The bike was one that been donated to the Men's Shed but was unfortunately beyond repair. We started to create a roadside display with the 30mph speed limit sign clearly visible on it. I made the frame to hold the basket, using the welding equipment in the Shed, from

an old metal chair found dumped at the back of our house. The centre panel is just a painted piece of wood.

"It started off as a simple floral design but as time has went on, we have regularly changed it up to match the seasons and special occasions.

"At Christmas, we added lights, a Christmas tree, elves and a sleigh (made from the side panels of our neighbour's old sofa). During the pandemic, we also paid tribute to the NHS with our elf dressed up in scrubs displaying a sign reminding people to 'stay at gnome'. November, was a very special display of poppies for Remembrance Day and on this occasion, we added a collection box and received donations from locals and visitors towards the cause."

Bill's wife Fiona added: "Originally, we had wanted a nice garden decoration to incorporate the speed limit, as there didn't seem to be many signs in the area, and it has evolved from there.

"Bill throws very little away—he can find a use for most things so he was keen to use the old bike and recycled materials. Our displays make people smile and certainly get their attention and remind them of the speed they should be driving.

"We are currently working on a display for Easter but the real message behind all of this is—up to 30mph is enough."



SHED PROJECTS

Arbroath Men's Shed's Penny Farthing project for the woolly workers

Arbroath Men's Shed has created a wooden penny farthing for local crafty group, the [Arbroath Woolly Workers](#).

Lynne Barton from the Arbroath Woolly Workers said: "The Woolly Workers are trying to jolly up the town by yarn-bombing public displays and installations. With our current project, we are working on a bicycle theme and asked our local Shed to make us a penny farthing which we thought would be a great feature. It will be put on display at the Fit o the Toon at Danger Point."

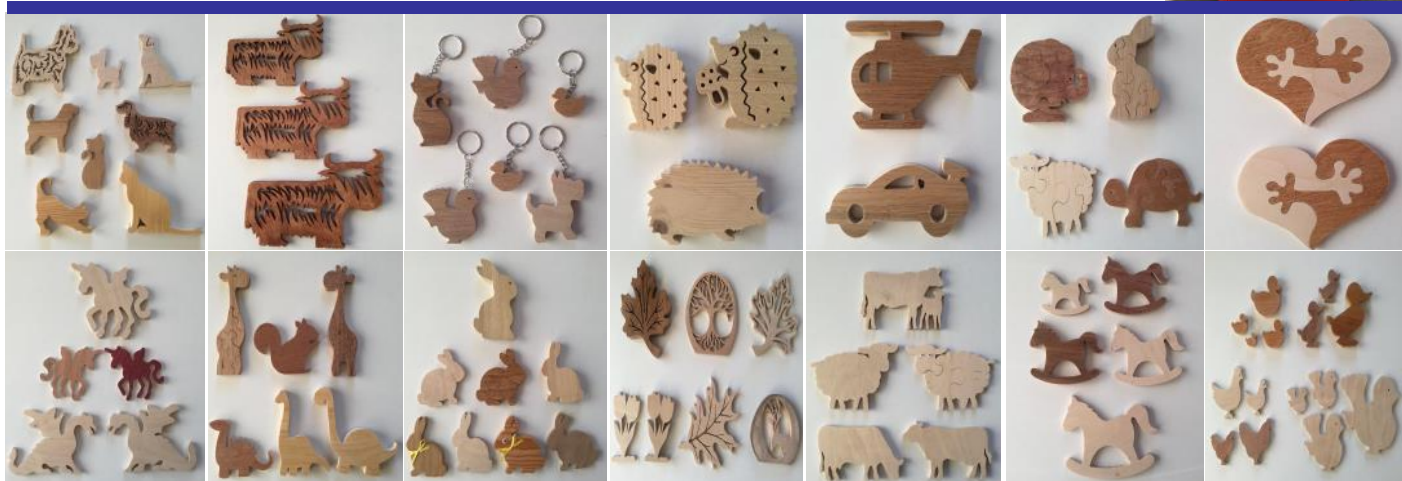


Ewan McGinnis from Arbroath Men's Shed said: "The penny farthing was designed and built by one of our members, John Pearson, with help from other members. It was made from recycled wood, all donated from various places."

"This is not the first project that we have done for the group. In December, we helped with their festive display and constructed a sleigh/bogie for the Old Shore Head near the harbour. We also made the structure for their 10-foot Christmas tree. The woolly workers then crafted more than 300 knitted and crocheted square to create the tree cover."



Follow Arbroath Men's Shed on Facebook at www.facebook.com/groups/255678118149509



Mintlaw & District Shedder creates wooden trinkets to raise funds

Despite Mintlaw & District Men's Shed's site within the grounds of Aden Country Park remaining closed following the damage caused by Storm Arwen, contractors are still permitted on site to continue the works on the former Gardener's Cottage set to become their new home.



Tony Sladdin from the Shed said: "The park was unfortunately significantly hit by the storm. Our Shed was lucky to have only suffered a lost gate. The park was closed for everyone's safety and the massive job of tree clearing began in early January. Our members returned to Zoom for our catch-ups and I decided to get to work with some additional fundraising and have been busy making over 100 scroll saw items (so far) from my workshop at home to raise some funds to put towards the general running costs of the Shed."

"The majority of the wood used is from recycled timber donated from various sources however we have also purchased some timber from a local woodsman and birch ply from a local timber store. The wooden items have been extremely popular with our friends, family and our supporters."

Follow the Shed on Facebook at www.facebook.com/groups/900901477009507



SHED PROJECTS



Auchterarder & District Men's Shed gifts nativity set to care home

In December, Auchterarder and District Men's Shed gifted a handmade Nativity set for the residents of Glencairn Care Home to enjoy.

Shed Secretary John Boyd, who presented the set to the Assistant Manager of the Care Home, said: "Each of the 14 delicate figurines—including a donkey, cows and sheep—were made from a moulding powder and all hand-painted by Shed members.

"Two of the Sheddors that helped make the unique set are residents at the care home. The team thoroughly enjoyed getting involved in this project.

"The stable was constructed from wooden off-cuts and painted to resemble planks of wood, with a roof made to look like aged terracotta tiles. The addition of lighting makes the stable glow and illuminates the whole scene.

"We hope that the residents enjoy the Nativity set for many more Christmases to come."

On the 1st February 2022, the members enjoyed their first physical meeting in the Shed since measures have been lifted. John

added: "It was a very busy day with 18 Sheddors attending and we were delighted to also welcome along three new members.

"It was obvious, from all the noise and chatter, that everyone relished getting back together again. Some enjoyed a game of Dominoes whilst another group with joinery skills were involved in assembling a compost bin for the community garden at the local Parish Church which was funded by Perth & Kinross Council.

"Another group is making bird tables which have been requested by local residents. It is great to be back."

Follow the Shed at www.facebook.com/Auchterarder-and-District-Mens-Shed-2139524616138411





Why not grab a cuppa
and take part in this fun quiz!

Source:
A Shedder—Three Towns Men's Shed

Swings and Roundabouts—Gains and Losses

John and his fellow Shedders meet several times a week in the evenings. They call themselves 'The Water Shed' on account that their Shed is close to a river and they close at 9pm.

All the members share a collective passion in their spare time and consider themselves adept in decoding messages.

A neighbouring Men's Shed in another town has just started up and recently held a fundraising gala to boost their funds with all prizes donated out of Shed funds but they have yet to settle on a name for their Shed.

John and his Water Shed peers are sitting round the table having a cuppa during a break from their activities. They have been discussing the fundraising event.

John said: "Listen to me, carefully." He smiled and added: "Accumulation is the secret to success here. Did you know that Richard won a monkey in the raffle? Stan had won one too. Splat the Rat gave Fred a score of two and Charlie liked the fact that his prize was just grand."

The Water Shed members are impressed with their fellow Men's Shed's luck, as they never win anything themselves.

John continued: "Richard generously gave his monkey to Ron, who was delighted and told Richard that nothing could make him happier, So, Richard took it back!"

Ed piped up: "Yes, they all had a great day by all accounts."

John added: "But they could not understand why the fundraising event failed. They haven't quite got the hang of things yet, have they? They were going to call their Shed 'The Bright Sparks' since most members are interested in electrical projects but they need to go back to the drawing board on that one, I think!"

Everyone round the table laughed as each had worked out why!

Can you?



**CLICK HERE TO CHECK
YOUR ANSWER**

The Aorta - 'The Forgotten Organ' Aortic dissection - a personal experience by Cliff Grover (Banchory & District Men's Shed)

I was delighted to read, in the [December issue of The Scottish Shedder](#), the article on page 30 on AAA - Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm. The advice given there is excellent and I urge men of 65+ to attend their screening.

As mentioned in the article, many people are completely unaware of their aorta, but it is an absolutely vital organ. The aorta is the main artery that carries blood to every part of the body - the heart itself, the head, eyes, brain, arms, all the central body organs (kidneys, liver etc.) and the legs. If something goes wrong with the aorta, something else will suffer.

In my case, the problem was not an AAA but an aortic dissection (AD). This is an immediately life-threatening condition which generally happens with no warning, affecting the upper part of the aorta, as distinct from the abdominal aorta - they have different medical characteristics. Two problems are that AD is comparatively rare and can give a huge range of symptoms - it is said to 'masquerade' as other conditions.

The most frequent symptoms are extreme pain around the heart, chest, back and neck areas, so it is unsurprising that many A&E departments look first at whether it is a heart attack. AD can also mimic severe gastric pain or an embolism on the lungs.

My own story is that I was in New Zealand visiting our daughter and working outside her house, preparing for Christmas 2017. I suddenly felt a colossal pain in my chest. I knew instantly I was in some sort of serious trouble and ran inside and shouted 'chest pain'. I then collapsed on the floor and shortly afterwards lost my vision. Paramedics took me to hospital where I received a CT scan and was found to have a dissection. Three hours later I was in surgery.

After a 14 hour operation, six weeks in ICU, a cardiac arrest and almost every other complication possible, two weeks in a cardiac ward and two months recuperation at my daughter's house, we flew home. I had a complete new aorta - valve, ascending, arch and first part of the descending aorta made from Dacron tubing (the dissection had not affected my abdominal aorta). I was now bionic and extremely fortunate to have had one of the world's top cardiothoracic surgeons on call at the time.

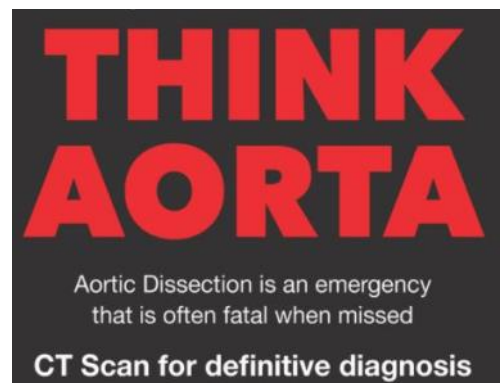
On my return, I had to step down as a Trustee for Banchory Men's Shed to look after my own health, though I have found the ongoing support of the Shed and from our members invaluable - just what Men's Sheds are for. Four years after my AD, I am still considerably below par in terms of my exercise capability however, other than that I am getting on fairly well and determined to get my original retirement plans back on track. The hills hopefully don't have long to wait for my return.

I have put my experience to good use as the Scotland Representative for Aortic Dissection Awareness UK & Ireland. A key initiative of ours is the "[THINK AORTA](#)" campaign, which aims to improve understanding and diagnosis of AD. The www.thinkaorta.net website has a [patient leaflet](#) and a [poster](#) and that you can download and consider displaying in your Shed and local public places (with permission of course).

AD is comparatively rare but data is slowly coming out that it is not as rare as it was originally thought. You probably don't need to worry, but it's wise to look at some of the known risk factors in your own life: Is your blood pressure high? Do you have an aneurysm? Do you have Marfan syndrome? Have you had a relative experience an aneurysm, AD, or have they died with an uncertain cause? And if you are in the unlucky position of needing to go to A&E with chest pain, did it come on very suddenly? (heart attacks are not as dramatic as shown on TV). Let them know if you have any of the risk factors for AD - it may not be one, but it needs to be considered.



Pictured: Cliff holds in place a graft similar to the life-saving one he received



Q: What do Gerrard Houllier (Liverpool ex-manager), DJ 'Whispering' Bob Harris, King George II, Lucille Ball and, recently, Chris Cairns (New Zealand cricketer) all have in common?

A: They all had an aortic dissection.

HEALTH MATTERS



Get help fast from your NHS practice with eConsult

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What is eConsult?

eConsult is a clever bit of software, used by patients and practices across the UK, that allows you to quickly and safely get help and advice from your own doctors and GP practice online, for free, from anywhere.

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eConsult is available to use any time, day or night, from any device connected to the internet. There is no need to wait in a phone queue or visit the practice. It takes just 3-4 minutes to complete an eConsult and your practice will get back to you within 1 working day, if not sooner.

**LIVE IN OVER
3,200**

NHS GP Practices

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29 million**

NHS patients

Be part of the change with the Scottish Mental Illness Stigma Survey

The Mental Health Foundation, See Me and Glasgow Caledonian University are undertaking a ground breaking research project to better understand how people living with severe, complex and/or enduring mental illnesses experience stigma and discrimination.

Researchers would like to speak with people aged 18 and over to find out:

- What stigma and discrimination people have experienced and how often
- Where in their lives people have experienced it and to what extent
- What impact these experiences have had on their lives and behaviours
- How people experience self-stigma
- What needs to change to improve the lives of people experiencing complex mental illnesses

Research like this has never been carried out in Scotland before and will look to address some of the most pervasive and severe stigma and discrimination that people in Scotland with mental illnesses face.

The project is open to people in Scotland and who, within the last year, have experienced a severe, complex and/or enduring mental illness, or illnesses, including:

- Schizophrenia or other primary psychotic disorder
- Bipolar or related disorder
- Obsessive-compulsive or related disorder
- Disorder specifically associated with stress (e.g. post-traumatic stress disorder)

- Dissociative disorder
- Feeding or eating disorder
- Personality disorder
- Severe and/or treatment-resistant depressive disorder
- Severe and/or treatment-resistant anxiety or fear-related disorder

Both people who have received a formal diagnosis as well as those who have not been diagnosed formally but believe they may be experiencing one or more of these mental illnesses are invited to take part.

Analysis of respondents so far shows that males are significantly under represented in the research, therefore we are urging Shedders to participate in this survey.

The Mental Health Foundation is also happy to visit Men's Sheds if they require support to complete the survey.

If you would like to participate, you will be asked to read important information about the survey, give your consent to take part and fill in a short screening form. You will then be invited to complete a survey – either online, over the phone or via video call with one of the researchers. It should take around 40-50 minutes.

Find out more about how to get involved at seemescotland.org/StigmaSurvey

If you have any questions, please contact Jo Finlay, Senior Research Manager, at jfinlay@mentalhealth.org.uk

The Scottish Mental Illness Stigma Survey JOIN THE CONVERSATION





48% of UK adults say the pandemic has negatively affected their wellbeing*

Are you, or is someone you know, struggling?
You can learn skills to help yourself and others cope.

For more information on our free workshops
and resources, visit redcross.org.uk/your-wellbeing

* Source: Opinium, August 2021, nationally representative sample of 2,003 UK adults.

The power
of kindness



WHAT'S COOKING?



Kerry Torrens Bsc (Hons) PgCert MBANT is a registered nutritionist with a postgraduate diploma in Personalised Nutrition & Nutritional Therapy.

She is a member of the British Association for Nutrition and Lifestyle Medicine (BANT) and a member of the Guild of Food Writers.

Over the last 15 years, she has been a contributing author to a number of nutritional and cookery publications, including BBC Good Food and Olive magazines. She has also hosted nutrition and health sessions at BBC Good Food Shows and been an expert speaker on various food and health related BBC radio programmes.

Kerry divides her time between analysing recipes for nutritional content, advising chefs and recipe developers as well as writing and editing food, cookery and health titles. She has worked with a number of top chefs, major food manufacturers and supermarkets.

The SMSA is delighted to share one of Kerry's delicious recipes that she has specially selected for Scottish Shedders! Kerry said: "This is the perfect recipe if you hate washing up! Using just one pan, this dish can be scaled up or down—halve the ingredients if you're cooking for one or double up if you have a bunch of hungry Shedders to feed!

"This delicious recipe contributes 3 of your 5 a day. I've used tinned tomatoes because we absorb more of the good-for-you compound called lycopene, from them. Don't leave out the eggs – they're a valuable source of choline, a nutrient we need for mood and memory. I hope you enjoy it."

You can follow Kerry and check out her delicious recipes on [Instagram](#).

Ingredients

- ½ tbsp olive oil
- 4 good quality chipolatas
- 4 rashers of unsmoked back bacon
- 1 red onion, cut into wedges
- Handful of mushrooms, cut into quarters
- 1 can of cherry tomatoes
- 1 tbsp tomato puree
- 1 can of cannellini beans (drained)
- 50-75ml water
- 2 eggs
- Handful of parsley

Anytime Brunch Serves 2



Prep: 5-10 mins | Cooking: 25 mins



Method

1. Get yourself a pan—you'll need a pan about 8-10 inches wide to allow the ingredients to cook evenly.
2. Heat the oil in the pan and add the chipolatas, cooking them until they are golden brown all over. Add the bacon to the pan along-with the mushrooms and the onion wedges. Cook until the bacon crisps, the mushrooms soften and the onions begin to caramelize.
3. Remove the bacon, sausages, mushrooms and onions to a plate while you prepare the sauce. Pour the contents of the can of tomatoes and the tomato puree into the pan and season to taste, add the drained beans and bring to a simmer. You're aiming for a thick sauce but you may need to add a little water if the tomatoes start to catch on the bottom of the pan.
4. After 5 minutes return the bacon, sausages and vegetables back to the pan and create 2 'nests' in the sauce, carefully break each egg and nestle them into the spaces you've made.
5. Cover the pan loosely with some foil and return to a medium heat for about 4 minutes – you're poaching the eggs in the sauce so cook until the egg whites are firm but the yolks are still runny or cook a little longer if you prefer a firmer egg.
6. When the eggs are cooked to your satisfaction remove from the hob, scatter with parsley or coriander and dive in!



Seth receives his new beach walker thanks to Remap project

Seth has Spina-Bifida and had always wanted to be able to walk and play with his family on the seafront. His regular walker was not suitable for the beach as his wheels would constantly sink in the sand. Banchory Shedder and Remap volunteer John Dunnett had just the solution.

With the help of a local occupational therapist at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, John got to work to transform a walking frame into a secure beach walker with much larger wheels allowing Seth to roam freely and... there is no stopping him now.

The Rehabilitation Engineering Movement Advisory Panel (REMAP) charity was the brainchild of army officer and engineer Major Pat Johnson who, in the 1960s, helped his disabled sister (who had contracted polio in infancy) by making some improvements to her home including wheelchair ramps and an electric hoist.

These simple solutions made a huge difference to her life—and gave her the independence she craved—and he resolved to bring similar changes to others' lives. Remap is now UK-wide and completes 3,500 projects every year.

The charity can help design and custom-make equipment to help disabled people live more independently. This support includes mobility, help in the home, managing personal care, enjoying sports and hobbies and much more. All work is carried out and checked by expert engineers, carpenters, technicians and occupational therapists and provided free of charge.

Engineer, Remap volunteer and Banchory & District Men's Shed member John Dunnett said: "I have been involved with the Remap charity for just over two years. When I heard about Seth having to sit whilst his sister ran about and played and splashed about in the water, I wanted to make something to give him freedom on the sand.

"I was able to get a couple of used zimmer frames from different manufacturers—one was a typical frame and the other taller and slimmer. I dismantled both and cut the parts to reduce them to suit Seth. Some of the shaped tubes had to be shortened and I was lucky to find a metal tent pole that was a tight fit in the cut tubes. I machined metal axles for the rear wheels that I was given by a local golf course professional and a local engineering company made up the front castor units to my design free of charge when they heard Seth's story. The front wheels were also donated by a caddy cart servicing company.

"I volunteer my time and made use of my engineering contacts so that the entire walker was created at no cost including the screws and pop rivets used to assemble it. The frame can be modified as Seth grows; the rear legs can be adjusted using the standard zimmer adjusters and I will remove the pop rivet joints, insert spacers to increase the length of the tubes and then rivet the joints again.

"It was very important that Seth's beach walker was adjustable so he can continue to enjoy beach walks with his family as he grows.

"There are always learning curves with these projects. If I was asked to make another walker, I would try and find the supplier of similar aluminium tube and obtain a tube bender or make up a bender which would save using pop rivet joints on cut down zimmer parts.

"Once complete, we tested the walker at Aberdeen Beach during the easter holidays when COVID rules were more relaxed. It was a cold windy day however everyone there was just delighted to watch Seth walk on the sand. Being a typical boy he went closer and closer to the waves,

the look on his face when he was soaked by a larger wave made it all worthwhile. The walker has seen a lot of use this summer and Seth's mum has sent me lots of lovely photos of it being used at Cruden Bay beach in more enjoyable weather.

"I can see a lot of potential for Sheds to get involved, and make a huge difference to the lives of people with a range of disabilities, by working in partnership with the Remap charity. A Men's Shed is the perfect space to carry out the work required for projects like this. All types of skills can be utilised—mechanical, woodworking, electrical and electronics."

David Reid, Regional Organiser Scotland at Remap, said: "We now have 10 panels across Scotland, from Shetland in the north to the Scottish Borders with some 50 hands-on people with engineering skills.

"Unfortunately, volunteers with woodworking and metalwork skills are becoming scarce and COVID has certainly impacted on our work. At the moment, we could have a project up north being constructed down south. So, we often turn to Men's Sheds local to the project for help.

"We have been so grateful for the assistance received from Men's Sheds. We are hoping to get more Sheds across Scotland involved in these project that can often be life-changing for the recipient."

"Major Pat Johnson MBE died in 2002. Thanks to his vision and effort, we continue to build ramps - and much more. Much like Men's Sheds, we repurpose what most would consider scrap materials. We still use ingenuity and experience to produce innovative solutions to problems. Pat Johnson's concept has more than stood the test of time and, thanks to him, the lives of thousands of disabled people have been transformed."

Would your Shed/Shedders be interested in getting involved with Remap?

Find out more at www.remap.org or contact David Reid at remap-scotland@btconnect.com

UNFORGOTTEN FORCES



**UNFORGOTTEN
FORCES**
Supporting Scotland's
Older Veterans

Older veterans Awareness free online workshops

www.age.scot/veterans

 **Age Scotland**
Love later life



Shedders—your veterans need you!

Unforgotten Forces is a partnership of charities in Scotland working together to boost wellbeing for ex-service men and women aged 60 and older. An important feature of the partnership is that it brings Armed Forces charities, including household names like Poppyscotland and Combat Stress, together with civilian charities such as the Scottish Men's Sheds Association and Age Scotland.

Why does this matter? If you recognise yourself as a veteran, you may approach an Armed Forces charity for support, however you might miss out on help from civilian charities. Equally, if you don't see yourself as a veteran but qualify as one (something more common than you might suppose) you can overlook support from Armed Forces charities.

With Unforgotten Forces, it doesn't matter whether you first approach a civilian or Armed Forces charity – we talk to each other to ensure older veterans get the right package of support.

For all of this to work, Unforgotten Forces needs a network of volunteer and professional eyes and ears across Scotland. People who can identify veterans among the older population and know how to connect

them with extra support to which they are entitled. Organisers in Men's Sheds are well-placed to play that part. But first they need to be 'older veteran aware.'

Age Scotland runs regular free online 'Older Veterans Awareness' short workshops that will enable you to identify veterans amongst Shedders, offer insights into military life and culture, and equip you to connect veteran Shedders with a wealth of extra support. 98% of participants giving us survey feedback tell us they would recommend the workshop. Here are a couple of recent comments:

"I really enjoyed the session with lots of interesting little nuggets to take away with me."

"I didn't realise how many organisation etc there are to support the veteran community and the training provided a great insight into this valuable resource. The course was excellently delivered."

For those who are already older veteran aware and wish to deepen understanding of and ability to work with Unforgotten Forces partners, there's a complementary Unforgotten Forces Induction short course.

You can find out more about the training, and book, at <https://age.scot/veterans>

UNFORGOTTEN FORCES—DMWS



Defence Medical Welfare Service
Supporting the frontline

The Defence Medical Welfare Service (DMWS) is a charity with a proud history that provide dedicated, professional and compassionate welfare services to the Armed Forces Community (serving, Reservists, Veterans and their families) at their time of need, when on a healthcare pathway due to physical and/or mental health issues.

DMWS is currently contracted to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to provide medical welfare and hospital liaison services to the serving military community in the UK and overseas. In Scotland, we are funded by the Scottish Government, NHS Scotland and other third sector charities and operate as part of the Age Scotland led **Unforgotten Forces (UF) consortium**.

DMWS, working as part of the UF link collaboratively with the Scottish Veterans Care Network (SVCN). This is the collaborative National Strategic Network who's primary purpose is to support a 'Once for Scotland' approach to the planning, design and delivery of an integrated, holistic, person-centred care pathway across the health and social care system. Its primary objective is to improve standards wherever possible and achieve parity of veteran care, at a consistent level across Scotland. It is a shared commitment to "leaving no one behind" and fulfilling the pledge of the Armed Forces Covenant.

We break down non-clinical barriers to recovery, such as anxiety, stress, poverty issues, homelessness and social isolation. We use our network and expert knowledge to access and mobilise statutory and third sector support so our service users can get back home and reduce the likelihood of unnecessary readmissions.

In 2020-2021, DMWS has supported **594** armed forces community members, **1,578** family members/carers and **757** staff, who were involved in the care of the armed forces community.

Currently, we operate in the following NHS Board areas and acute hospitals:

NHS Lothian

- The Western General Hospital
- The Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh
- St John's Hospital, Livingston

NHS GG&C

- In Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, Glasgow
- the Vale of Leven Hospital in Alexandria

NHS Borders

- The Borders General Hospital, Melrose

NHS Fife

- In Queen Margaret's Hospital in Dunfermline
- The Victoria Hospital in Kirkcaldy

NHS Lanarkshire

- University Hospital Wishaw
- University Hospital Hairmyers
- University Hospital Monklands

We have a Scotland-wide response capability with the following:

PPP Programme

- Under Scottish Veterans Wellbeing Alliance and in partnership with Fares For Free F4F (an escorted patient travel scheme)— Scotland wide

Emergency Response Service Staff (ERS)

- A response team that can operate out-with our board areas Scotland wide on a case by case basis.



Referral contact:

Tel: 0800 999 3697

Email: referrals@dmws.org.uk

Emergency Response Service (ERS)

We also provide a UK-wide telephone welfare support service via the **DMWS Emergency Response Service**. This enables us to reach those needing our support who are receiving treatment in hospital where there is not a DMWS welfare officer in residence.

Telephone: 0800 999 3697

Email: referrals@dmws.org.uk

DMWS Headquarters contact:

Tel: 01264 774 000

Email: info@dmws.org.uk

DMWS Scotland contact:

Tel: 01738 472143

Mobile: 07721127780

Email: rreid@dmws.org.uk

Web: www.dmws.org.uk

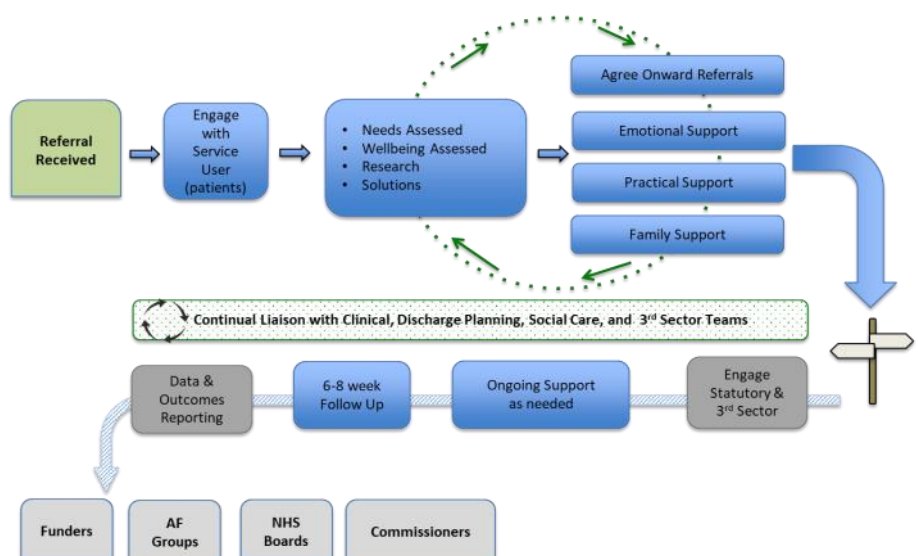
Follow us on social media:

Twitter: [@theDMWS](https://twitter.com/theDMWS)

Instagram: [thedmws](https://www.instagram.com/thedmws)

Facebook: [DMWS](https://www.facebook.com/DMWS)

LinkedIn: [Defence Medical Welfare Service](https://www.linkedin.com/company/Defence-Medical-Welfare-Service)



Proven Service Delivery Model: Supporting Recovery: Physical Health, Mental Health, and Wellbeing. Driven by the Needs of the Service User



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 four 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

