

SHOULDER to SHOULDER

Newsletter 046 | December 2018



Away in a Men's Shed

Away in a Men's Shed, no crib for a bed,
Malcolm is sawing whilst chatting
to Ned.

The Shedders are making a bird box
or three,
whilst Andy is drinking his fifth cup
of tea.

Geoff is a tinkering with Roger and Ted,
They're making a key fob for old
Auntie Peg.

Sally is turning, whilst making a bowl,
But Tony has just drilled a hole in
his leg.

The Shedders are Shedding and
making some toys,
For all Santa's good list; the girls and the boys.
There's trains and there's toy cars, a boat and a crane.
Whilst Albert is carving his granddaughters name.

We wish a Merry Christmas to you and your kin,
And hope you have nice presents and a bottle of Gin.
We'll see you in the New Year with chisels and planes,
Happy Christmas from Santa and his Reindeer in reins.



**Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year from the UKMSA
team and board of trustees**



Merry Christmas from the Trustees

Hello everyone,

It seems to come around quicker and quicker each year!

The Christmas holiday season is upon us once again—whether you love it or loathe it – you can't get away from its significance.

We all know how hard it can be to be involved at the core of running a Shed – so please *do* take some time out for yourselves to rest over Christmas and New Year – I'm sure you've more than earned it.

That said, if you are anything like me and not good at taking your own advice, you will have been planning your Shed Christmas party, working out who to stick in the Santa -suit, and making sure your Shed is going to stay open around this time, for all those who might need it.

2018 has certainly been an incredibly busy and involved year for all of us here at UKMSA , and I would like to personally thank my fellow Trustees, and the staff team—Laura, Kate and Charlie—for all their outstanding work. Well done.

And well done to all of our Shed Ambassadors, our Members Sheds, and everyone else out there involved in the Men's Sheds movement.

Your hard work and dedication continues to make a huge difference to the lives of so many people – and it was great to actually meet so many of you in person at this year's ShedFest – I can't wait for the next one !

There is certainly going to be a lot going on in 2019. I wish you all the best for the

Season, and I look forward to getting out to see more of you in the New Year.

Kind regards

Nathan Sarea

UKMSA Chair



The UKMSA offices will be closed from 5pm on Friday 21st December and will re-open at 9am on Wednesday 3rd January

T: 0300 772 9626 E: admin@ukmsa.org.uk

ShedFest 2018

Over 200 Shedders travelled from far and wide to join us at ShedFest in Worcester on Saturday 17th November. A big thank you to them, and our Ambassadors, guest speakers, demonstrators, partners and sponsors, who helped make it a fantastic day celebrating what makes Sheds special and so important to both Shedders, their families and local communities.



As a team we really enjoyed speaking to so many of you and hearing your stories of creativity, problem-solving and how your Sheds are developing. It was great to see so many different Sheds sharing advice and experiences with each other, which is a characteristic of the Shed movement.

Some great feedback will help us prepare for next year, look out for plans in the spring.

For member Sheds we've uploaded the keynote speaker and workshop presentations to our website, with answers to the many questions which you asked us via our 'wall of questions', and other resources to support your Sheds.



To see the video of the day visit www.menssheds.org.uk/shedfest2018/

Not a member Shed?

Visit menssheds.org.uk/join/ to find out about the great benefits of being a member Shed, and to sign up online. Alternatively you can contact our Membership and Support Officer, Laura Winkley, at admin@ukmsa.org.uk or call 0300 772 9626.



Celebrating Men's Sheds

At ShedFest 2018, UKMSA shared the statistics and interesting findings of the most recent Shedder Survey, of over 500 Sheddors' views.

We have also had conversations with a variety of Sheds across the UK, and have compiled some incredible statistics.

To download resources from ShedFest 2018, including the statistics visit

menssheds.org.uk/shedfest-2018-resources/

As Sheds you can use this information to shout about how great your Shed is as part of this marvellous movement, or use the statistics to strengthen any funding bids you may write to support your Sheds application's.

22% More Focused



52% new sense of Purpose

**Over 2 million
Shedder hours
every year**

14,500 - Hammers & Mallets

Sheds are open over 200,000 hours every year

**Over 1 million
cups of tea
a year**

97% Made new friends

31,000 - Chisels and Gouges

[illegible]

Shed of the Year 2018

This year's Men's Shed of the Year Award has gone to Princess Alice Hospice Man Shed, in Surrey - created for people living with life limiting illness, their carers and bereaved relatives. The aim is to give these Sheddors confidence, companionship and a positive outlook during a particularly difficult period in their life.

In making the award the Chairman, UKMSA – Nathan Sarea said *"We are delighted to be able to give this award to Princess Alice Hospice Man's Shed. They have done amazing work in bringing together the patients, staff and community to create this unique Shed. Loneliness is a serious issue which affects people of all ages and backgrounds and is often a particular problem at difficult times in our lives. This Shed has shown how we can help people stay positive and feel valued throughout such times."*

The Princess Alice Hospice Man Shed aims to reach out to bereaved men, men who are full time carers and who need someone to talk to, and to men coming to terms with their own terminal illness.

Helen Sergeant Community Engagement Officer from the Princess Alice Hospice said, *"We are so proud to have won Shed of the Year 2018 – we have seen the therapeutic benefits of the Man Shed – for session leaders and shedders – are enormous and we are extremely proud of it. It truly changes lives, it gives people happiness, it gives them confidence and comfort and helps them move on with their lives."*



"Our members have been involved in all sorts of Shed activities from making memory boxes, bird houses and Christmas decoration to designing and building products to help our patients here at the hospice."

One Shedder said *"I have cancer, I've recently started to visit the Shed and I've made some smashing friends. When you walk in it feels like the sun has come out and the heaviness has lifted from your shoulders. Talking to people who know what you're going through really helps."*



Dalbeattie Shed (2017 winners) passing the baton on to Princess Alice Hospice.

What else can we celebrate in Sheds?

Next year, UKMSA would like to recognise more great achievements and contributions from within the Shed community, and we want to hear your ideas.

They could be individual or group related awards, or even awards for projects and builds. Please share your suggestions with us by emailing admin@ukmsa.org.uk with your ideas for categories we can award next year.

What to do when you feel lonely

Christmas is a time when lots of people spend time with family and friends, and people seemed to be filled with more cheer than usual.

We also know that for some Shedders Christmas can be a particularly lonely time of year too. Why not think about sending a text or Christmas card to fellow Shedders to make sure they don't feel alone this festive season?

What follows is a summary of advice offered by seven therapists to people who may be experiencing loneliness or know others who are. The full article is available here <https://bit.ly/2QHbJ9c>



The 19th Surgeon General of the United States, Vivek Murthy, on a recent visit to Camden Men's Shed.

In a cover story for the Harvard Business Review in October 2017, former Surgeon General Vivek Murthy declared "the world is suffering from an epidemic of loneliness." On this side of the Atlantic, the Government recently published a Loneliness Strategy, and 55,000 people have taken part in a BBC Loneliness Experiment.

But while decision-takers and policy-makers work out how to tackle health issues associated with loneliness on a larger scale, there are practical things people can do to help relieve the negative effects of loneliness.

Practice small talk – with shop staff and others you see from day to day; even a brief comment can make seemingly impersonal interactions a bit more friendly and inviting.

Get comfortable with your own company – Getting together with others in a desperate attempt to not be in one's own company can leave you feeling more lonely. Learn to enjoy your own company – by going to see a film, reading, or watching a TED talk on YouTube.

Put time into your friendships – Friends aren't found, they are made over time. It takes 6-8 conversations before someone considers us a friend so put yourself in situations where you see the same faces; a park at the same time each morning perhaps.

The lonely part inside – Try to connect what you enjoy with the outside world. So if you enjoy writing, join a writing group. Also explore the origins of your loneliness – is it something recent? Were your parents lonely?

Understand your loneliness – is it because your relationships lack depth or meaning, or because you feel people, including friends, don't really know you? If so, try moving from small talk in day-to-day conversations to questions that foster deeper human connection.

Reach out to family – and extended family. Something as simple as writing a letter to a distant family member or setting up a regular weekly phone call to a sibling or cousin can have a huge impact on overall mood.

Embrace who you are – If you're an introvert, enjoy a smaller group of friends – you don't have to be part of a large group and go out all the time. Pursue interests, not people – this can lead you to like-minded individuals.



For more on the Loneliness Strategy and the BBC Loneliness Experiment go to <https://bit.ly/2PAXL4Q> and <https://bbc.in/2OqNDhG>

If you enjoy using social media and want to share online with others, you can join with comedienne Sarah Millican's Christmas Day twitter campaign using the hashtag #joinin. For more information, see an interview with her here— <https://bit.ly/1CHtAze>

Men's Sheds get thrifty

For the second year running Men's Sheds joined with 45,000 other visitors in Redcar to celebrate what can be done with a little bit of ingenuity and very little money.

The Festival of Thrift is an annual event held in the North East to showcase what can be achieved through upcycling, recycling and other ways of taking care of our planet. The festival stretched across ten zones featuring live performances, entertainment and activities. The theme this year was 'Sustainable Transport' and the programme included performances inside a giant wheel, Wheelhouse by Acrojou, a musical adventure with Bicycle Boy where the audience pedalled to keep the show going, and a lively outdoor performance celebrating women, cycling and fashion from Bicycle Ballet.

Volunteer Ambassadors Geoff Allison from Dalbeattie Men's Shed, Graham Storer from Whitby Men's Shed and Brian Cooke from Andover Shed, along with a number of Sheddors from Redcar talked Men's Sheds all weekend to visitors to their stall. The Sheds were located in the stableyard showcasing what Sheds can make, and selling lots to support Redcar and Whitby Men's Sheds to lots of people from across the county but mainly the north.

The Ambassadors had conversations with many people, some of whom wanted to know how to start their own Shed. Volunteer Ambassador Brian Cooke said *"There was a huge variety of stands including how to make jam's and chutney, handbags from inner tubes, wooden sculptures, children's toys, and recycled makes, giving us plenty of ideas for recycling projects in the future. Throughout the weekend there was a number of music acts and jugglers and although it wasn't the easiest to get to there was masses of parking. Thanks to having two extra volunteers from Royal Voluntary Service, myself and other Ambassadors were able to speak to everyone who wanted to talk about Sheds, including setting some new ones up, and still have time to see and speak to stall holders over the weekend. I'm looking forward to next year."*

For more information about the Festival of Thrift, visit www.festivalofthrift.co.uk/.



A lot can happen in a year

As the Forest of Dean Shed reaches it's first birthday, Shedder Paul Head reflects on their first year...



Just over a year ago seven of us were sitting at a table in the garden of the Rising Sun Inn in the Forest of Dean. We were discussing starting up a Men's Shed for the local rural community. One attendee, Geoff Trout, offered the group the use of his double garage workshop, complete with woodworking machines. Premises are normally a major initial problem for a new Shed, so the group jumped at the chance.

The first meeting of the Shed was scheduled for the following week and we've met every week, except for Christmas holidays, since then. One year on we are a registered Community Interest Company with over 30 members. Promotional leaflets and posters have been distributed, a website and Facebook page created and all the necessary insurance, training and health and safety procedures have been put in place.

We have attracted a diverse group of individuals, including people who are lonely, widowers, widows, partners who have nursed a partner back to health in need of social interaction, brain injured individuals, those in the early stage of dementia, those recovering from illness and depression, and those who just want to learn and share skills. We have members aged 29 to 95.

The individual projects undertaken by members include tool sharpening, restoring furniture, stained glass work, bowl turning,

and repairing tools and garden machinery. We have been lucky to receive some tool donations to use and, if we cannot use them, passed onto Tools for Self-Reliance, a charity that recycles tools for sending to African communities.

The Shed has undertaken some community projects including making a planter for the Woolaston Memory Group and restoring benches for the Thomas Blake Memorial gardens in Ross on Wye, with funding support from the Ross on Wye Lions Club. Further projects are underway from Cinderford to Llandogo.

A particular activity practised by all members is drinking cups of tea and coffee, eating biscuits and having a laugh. We know we have already made a difference to our members. To quote one of our Sheddors *"I have made new friends and learnt some great things, it's probably saved my life, or at least my sanity"*.

Looking to the future, we are working with the Dean Forest Railway to establish a working partnership including plans for new and larger premises so we can increase the membership and extend the types and number of activities we can offer. Our primary focus now is to build a more permanent base on a secure site to give the association longevity well beyond the initial funding and build.



Bringing the homeless out of the cold

The UK is the 5th richest county in the world, and yet tonight over 20,000 people will sleep on the streets and in shop doorways.

This epidemic is not just limited to single males with a drink or solvent addiction but to families with children who find themselves on the streets due to landlords evicting them for non-payment of rent to young vulnerable girls who have run away from abusive homes.

Iglou is an Isothermal Shelter for the homeless. It is made from the latest materials and is designed to help homeless people combat cold, rain and bad weather and to make their lives a little more tolerable.



Invented by Geoff Reynal in France, the Iglou (www.iglou.fr/english) is easy to manufacture, easy to erect and has been proven to save lives.

The purpose of Iglou is not to try and solve the homeless crisis here in the UK, but to offer a temporary shelter to rough sleepers and to get them out of the cold and wet weather and into a dry, warm and safer place.

"After seeing the Iglou in France I thought the product would work here in the UK. I see my role as letting everyone know that Iglou exists and then to arrange distribution and manufacture. This is where Men's Sheds come in" said Nick Kirk, who describes himself as the self-appointed UK Coordinator for the project.

"Shedders are located all around the UK and more often than not are in the towns and cities where the homelessness issues are greatest. Shedders are compassionate people who want to help others and they potentially have the resources and ability to manufacture the Iglou's."

"Iglou gives Shedders the opportunity to make something which will have a positive outcome and which will save lives on the Street. Who better to make and distribute Iglou's than 'Men's Sheds'?"



"Iglou is a humanitarian project and not for profit. I am happy to supply all Sheds with an interest in the project with drawings, videos, supplier's details and support where I can to get the Iglou's made at no cost."

"Winter is fast approaching – would you like to be sleeping on the streets tonight?"

For further details please email Nick Kirk, nkirk@btinternet.com.

NEW SHEDS ON THE BLOCK

MAP

The Find-a-Shed tool on our website is the most popular page and requests to add Sheds to the map is one of the most common we receive. The map is a great way to get your Shed noticed, to get new members and attract support from individuals, companies and organisations in the community. It is also a vital tool for men across the UK to easily find and join their local Shed.

www.findashed.org.uk

Make sure you're on the map and your contact details are up to date so people can find you to join your Shed or give support.

We're wishing the following Sheds the best of luck in their development:

Museum of Cannock Chase Men's Shed, Staffordshire; Hawkhurst Men's Shed, Kent; Pocklington Shed, East Yorkshire; and North Allerton Men's Shed, North Yorkshire.

and welcoming the following Sheds, now open on the map:

The Shed at Top Barn, Worcester; and Henfield Shed, West Sussex

Have you got a project to share with other Sheds... or are you in need of some inspiration?

Visit www.menssheds.org.uk/shed-projects/

This month we have added a new section to the website to help share ideas and give you some inspiration, but we need the help of Sheds to make it work.

We know that Sheds have amazing creativity and create some truly unique items, and we also know how great Sheds are at sharing!

We have built a new page on the website to share photos of Men's Sheds projects and creations. For member Sheds, if there are extra drawings, templates or notes you'll be able to access those through the website too to help you create new projects.

To populate the website, we need the help of Sheds and Sheddors, who will be credited, with photos of projects, along with any notes or sketches of things other Sheddors might like to make. If you'd like to share anything, please email Laura Winkley at admin@ukmsa.org.uk, and we'll share your designs online. Then if you're stuck for inspiration, you can look online and see what floats your boat.

Visit the page now to see what's already there, and consider sharing your design with others.

Shares, not shares...

Mike Jenn tells the story of how one Shed is seeking support in more than one way.

The Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest Men in Sheds project has a novel approach to building support within its community. Instead of seeking a donation they are offering shares. What they have sought from local companies and organisations is still a donation, it doesn't convey any legal right, but they are hoping that by buying a share the donor will be encouraged to have more of an interest in the Shed than if they had given a simple handout.



In the first nine months they have had 18 sponsors and received a store discount, a craft shop offering to display products for sale, a deepening relationship with a care home, and even a free canal cruise and lunch from the Bromsgrove Lions Club following its visit to pick up its share certificate.

Shed promotion has also been helped by media students from Worcestershire College making a short video (https://m.youtube.com/watch?_p_SBhOZQgeg&feature=share) which led a recent visit by the BBC local TV news and now another visit from BBC online.

This approach builds on the idea of a share as a form of membership. Holding a share implies a willingness to remain involved and smooths the way for informing and involving the shareholder in the future.



Success for Elmbridge Men in Sheds, thanks to the Shed community

Congratulations to Elmbridge Men in Sheds, who applied for a Skipton Grassroots grant. We shared their funding bid on social media and in October's *Shoulder to Shoulder*, and through the support of votes from the Elmbridge local community and the Shed movement, they have successfully been awarded £500 for their Shed.

Stuart Baldwin from Elmbridge Men in Sheds said "A huge thank you to all those who voted for us.



We received the fantastic news at the beginning of November and the £500 grant will make a big difference to us. It will ensure we have more than enough screws, nails, paint and wood for the projects we have lined up. Thank you again."

If you have a funding application you need public support for, email Laura at admin@ukmsa.org.uk with the details so we can let other Sheddors know how they can support your Shed.

Bitterne Shed's treetop escape



Bitterne Shed Club recently completed their first project for a group in their local community. For over two months Sheddors have been busy building an indoor tree house for Harefield Primary School. Julie Marsh, the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) at the school, said she wanted to create a screened off 'quiet area' within the 'Treetops' learning support room, and the Shed Club conceived the idea of the indoor tree house.

Sheddors have created a platform 30cms off the floor, with walls on three sides (the room's wall forms the fourth side) into which are cut leaf-shaped holes for a doorway, through which the children climb, and windows so the teachers can see inside. Wherever possible Bitterne Shed like to use

salvaged materials and to make the treehouse they used wood from a dismantled builders' shelter, courtesy of Williams Southern Ltd, and an unwanted chipboard wardrobe. The tree house was installed during the half term holiday.

In a thank you letter to the Shed the pupils said *"When we arrived at Treetops today we were amazed at what we saw. A beautiful tree house. We love it! We are already enjoying spending time in the tree house with our books and toys. Thank you for all your time in making it for us."*

Has your Shed got a community project to shout about? Let us know so we can share it with others. Email Laura at admin@ukmsa.org.uk.



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admin@ukmsa.org.uk | 0300 772 9626 | www.menssheds.org.uk

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