

UKMSA meet Minister for Loneliness

In early January Nathan Sarea, Chairman of UKMSA, and our Chief Officer, Charlie Bethel, met with the Rt. Hon. Mims Davies MP—Minister for Sport and Civil Society, and Minister for Loneliness. The meeting was to reaffirm the role and commitment of Men's Sheds in the UK to support British Government initiatives and particularly the strategy for tackling loneliness launched last year by her predecessor The Rt. Hon. Tracey Crouch.

High on our agenda was to report the findings of the 2018 UKMSA Shed Survey, completed by over 500 Shedders, which Charlie presented at ShedFest in November 2018. The Minister, who has previously visited her own local Shed in Eastleigh, confirmed her support of the Shed



movement and has already provided a number of contacts and introductions to support our work.

There have been several follow up conversations since the meeting with the Minister's team looking at research and how we might support the movement and our programmes.

Our thanks go to the Minister and her team for their time and continued support as we support the Shed movement in the UK.

To read *A connected society - A strategy for tackling loneliness*, click here <https://bit.ly/2RhBIWX>



Chair of UKMSA board, Nathan Sarea, outside Westminster

Thanks for having us!

Over the last few months the team have visited Sheds including Amersham, Beeston, Calne, Dereham, Desborough, South Molton, Sunnyside, and The Boiler House (in Manchester).

Thank you for all the tea, biscuits and stories you've shared with us. Although we don't always spend as much time as we'd like in Sheds (we'd never get anything done otherwise) we're always grateful for the warm welcome we receive and the time you take to show us around, it helps remind us why they're so important to Shedders and their communities.

We look forward to meeting more of you in the coming months!

Tweeting all bird box makers...

It's National Nest Box Week (NNBW) this February, from 14th to the 21st. We know Men's Sheds are super-talented at building bird boxes in all shapes, sizes, colours and unique designs. If you have an abundance of bird boxes in your Shed, it could be a great way to get involved with this campaign. National Nest Box Week was established and developed by British Trust for Ornithology and Britain's leading birdcare specialist Jacobi Jayne. It takes place at a time when tradition has it that small birds pair up ahead of the breeding season. Natural nest sites for birds, such as holes in trees or old buildings, are disappearing fast as gardens are 'tidied' and old houses are repaired.



Taking part in NNBW gives people the chance to contribute to bird conservation whilst giving the pleasure of observing breeding birds that may be attracted to their nest box.

Several Sheds have told us that building bird boxes are a great way to support new Shedders learn important skills (such as measure twice, cut once!) and feel like they've accomplished a completed project relatively quickly. There are several designs for nest boxes on their website at www.nestboxweek.com, complete with cutting lists and plans, so you don't even have to design one yourself.

Top tips for putting up your nest box

- **Not too close to another nest box** - nest boxes of the same type should not be sited too close together as this may promote aggressive behaviour between neighbours.
- **Shelter your box from the weather** - the front of the nest box should be angled vertically or slightly downwards to prevent rain from entering the nest box. Make sure it is sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight.
- **Height from the ground should be 3 metres** - small-hole boxes are best placed 1-3m above ground on tree trunks, but avoid sites where foliage obscures the entrance hole. If there are no trees in your garden, the next best option is to place your box on the side of a shed or wall.
- **Open-fronted nest boxes should be hidden from view** - attach your box to a wall or fence that has shrubs and creepers growing against it.
- **Make sure cats cannot get into the box** - ensure that it is not easily accessible to predators (cats and squirrels).
- **Consider a metal plate around hole to deter squirrels** - this preventive measure that can be used to deter squirrels from gaining access. These plates are available commercially and can be purchased from any good garden centre or bird care company at very little cost.
- **Keep nest box away from bird feeders** - as high levels of activity of visiting birds could disturb nesting pairs.
- **Use galvanized or stainless steel screws or nails that will not rust.** If fixing boxes to trees, galvanised wire can be used to tie the box to the trunk or hang it from a branch. Make sure to regularly inspect these fittings to ensure the box remains securely attached.
- **Traditionally, nest boxes for small birds are put up in the spring** - pairs begin to prospect in the latter half of February, so a box put up at the end of the winter stands a good chance of attracting nesting birds. However, it is never too early or late to put up a nest box, as some birds will use them to roost in during the winter months.

How to win the Lottery

"Simply applying to fund a Men's Shed won't succeed" said the National Lottery adviser "we need added value. Currently we're looking for inter-generational work for example".

Eastbourne Shed has been open for four years and its 50 members average 15 people attending three days a week in well-equipped premises. Oscar Plumley has been the paid Coordinator throughout and told me about the process of applying to the Lottery.

"We decided to set up a project making beehives with a local primary School" he said. *"When it came to getting evaluations from the staff, students and Shedders it revealed its value was much greater than we first thought."* This contact led to Shedders being invited to give talks and the school staff described these as 'inspirational' for them and the pupils. School records of other related work included one-to-one time for ex-pupils of a special needs school with eyesight and/or hearing restrictions to meet Shedders. They had also given help to individuals such as a young man wanting to modify his skateboard, and organised 'women's days' help on Saturdays to encourage their involvement. Together these records showed what inter-generational work could be achieved.

Oscar explained the secret of their success. *"A big help to our application was that the Shed had supported 45 local charities over the last three years by making or fixing things such as a tombola for a homeless charity and providing some paid temporary work for their clients when the opportunity arose."* The retired Shedders in particular felt that these projects validated their skills and affirmed their value in the community. That feedback gave Oscar the confidence to commit them to future work in the Lottery application.

The successful grant award of £469,000 covers the cost of three Sheds over five years opening three days a week each with a paid coordinator. The need for more Sheds in Eastbourne had been shown by the range of interests amongst the Shedders and the distances some of them travel to attend. The plan is for one of these new Sheds to be more production-oriented and another will be quieter and more arts-focussed. New marketing will include introductory workshops in skills such as glasswork, airbrushing and clock repair which will be publicly available with a charge being made to non-Shedders. *"The Lottery assessors liked the increase in the number of people likely to benefit"* says Oscar.



The grant commits them to a range of outcomes including Shedders working with 15 schools/groups over five years, continued health assessments and community projects, but it does not require them to do any extra fundraising. Oscar worked closely with his experienced boss John Trainor on the 70-page document and has offered to share his experience of the National Lottery with other Sheds.

You can visit the Shed's website at www.eastbourneshed.co.uk

#learnmoreaboutED

- Erectile dysfunction (ED) can have a profound effect on a man, his self-esteem and his relationships.
- More than 50% of men over 40 suffer from some degree of ED.
- Erectile dysfunction is estimated to affect 25 to 35 million men over the age of 18 in Europe.

Erectile dysfunction can have a serious impact on mental health

It is important not to underestimate the psychological impact that erectile dysfunction can have on a man, as recognised by the World Health Organization stating that sexual health is fundamental to the physical and emotional wellbeing of humans.

Among the psychological aspect is the issue of age and the worry that older men need to 'put up with it'. Consultant urological surgeon, Asif Muneer says, *"Within my work there is no discrimination regarding age, I have treated men from their early 20s to a man in his 90s. It really makes no difference to us as long as they fulfil the criteria and we can make a difference to their lives."*

With an ageing population and the treatment of more aggressive cancers, particularly those from childhood, Mr Muneer has seen an increase in younger men affected by erectile dysfunction following cancer treatment.

John Goodridge, sexually active pensioner:

"At 77 years old I count myself very lucky to be here. I've survived cancer four times in total, but when I had my prostate removed in 2010 following a diagnosis of prostate cancer I suffered a common side effect – erectile dysfunction."

Regardless of whether you have a partner or not, a man needs to feel like he can perform sexually. In the three years I spent searching for the right treatment I became depressed and lonely mainly because although these conditions are well known, they are rarely talked about. Men like to joke, but it is women who are far more practical at getting themselves help."

While it wasn't something I felt I could talk about openly, privately I was doing a lot of research. After tablets, pumps and finally injections failed me, I booked an appointment with my GP in 2013 to hear more about penile implants, delighted that they were available on the NHS."

UKMSA are taking part in a TWITTER CHAT on the 14th February for National Impotence Day – please tune in to ask healthcare professionals questions and to engage further with reducing the stigma around erectile dysfunction.
#LearnmoreaboutED

For additional information visit: EDtreatments.com



One life lost is one too many

For some Shedders, Men's Sheds are the place where they feel safest talking. Sometimes it's the state of the weather, or the impending politics (let's not mention the 'B' word). Other times it can be about difficulties in their lives. This might not be easy, but sometimes preparing ourselves to talk about difficult topics can help us feel more confident, and enable us to offer more support.



FREE ONLINE TRAINING

Andy Ryland, a Community Development Officer, who has been supporting the start-up of Sheds in the Yorkshire area, emailed us with this helpful signpost to some free online training about talking to people who are feeling suicidal —

"This year I have had two instances when I have met people who were having suicidal thoughts. I have recently come across this short on line training course produced by the www.zerosuicidealliance.com. I think the situations depicted are very realistic and in many respects similar to the situations I dealt with. Fortunately I seem to have done the right things at the time."

You can access this FREE training here—<http://bit.ly/2Ug1Vkp>.

A picture paints 1,000 words

Searching for Shed logos for previous issues of *Shoulder to Shoulder* it appears not all Sheds have logos (that's a thing like the Nike swoosh or the Apple apple) or if they did, they are keeping them under wraps.

A good logo can work well to identify your Shed – a memorable image that says something that words alone can't convey... about the fun, the people, the warm welcome you're guaranteed. For many a single image is a great tool for identification and wider recognition with the wider public.

Chris Lee, who helped set up The Repair Shed in Hemel Hempstead, was lucky enough to have a graphic designer for a running buddy who cleverly incorporated a shed image in a spanner. But something simple and bold can work as well – particularly if it's going to be reproduced quite small, on different surfaces and, maybe, in black and white. Think of the swoosh and the apple. A few well-chosen words can add another dimension - well done Gortin Men's Shed for including a short pithy message that says what they do on the tin.

What do you think makes a great logo? Send your Shed logo in jpg format to admin@ukmsa.org.uk for display in a future issue of *Shoulder to Shoulder*.



Benefits for UKMSA Member Sheds — don't miss out!

UKMSA was started to support both newly and more established Sheds. We don't always have all the answers, but we're not afraid to do our homework if you need help. Although we are here to support all Sheds in the UK with information and advice, there are lots of benefits from being a UKMSA Member, for only £24 a year!

Discounts

UKMSA have developed partnerships with businesses to help member Sheds save money, making your finances go further (to buy more tea).

As a UKMSA member Shed, you can enjoy:

- 49% off hand tools and 29% off power tools with **Triton Tools**
- 22.5% on initial orders over £1200 and 10% off thereafter with **Lumberjack Tools**
- 5% off orders with **Axminster Tools & Machinery**
- 5% off orders over £200 with **Shedstore**



Resources and information guides to save you time

We have an online resource library of over 50 documents you access 24/7, so when you can't get us on the phone or email you might still be able to find the answer you're looking for in one of our information guides.

We have template constitutions, draft policies, and other resources to help save you time, so you can enjoy being in your Shed more than creating paperwork.

Have your say in UKMSA...

One of the things we have learnt over time is that Shedders have opinions! We know they aren't always the same, but it's important that they're listened to. We're still working on this. One way to have your say is through member votes at our general meetings, including our Annual General Meeting.

Prioritised support from our Membership and Support Officer, Laura

Our Membership and Support Officer, Laura, is here to support Sheds in the UK, and it's a full time job for her! For member Sheds we offer extra support, such as searching our funding database for funders. We also prioritise new opportunities for Sheds who are members. We still support Sheds who aren't members with phone and email support, however we recognise the contribution member Sheds make with their membership fee and aim to go that little bit further to help.

For more information visit messheds.org.uk/join, or contact Laura on 0300 772 9626, email admin@ukmsa.org.uk.

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:

Bognor Regis Men's Shed and FramFix in Suffolk.

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

Brechin Men's Shed

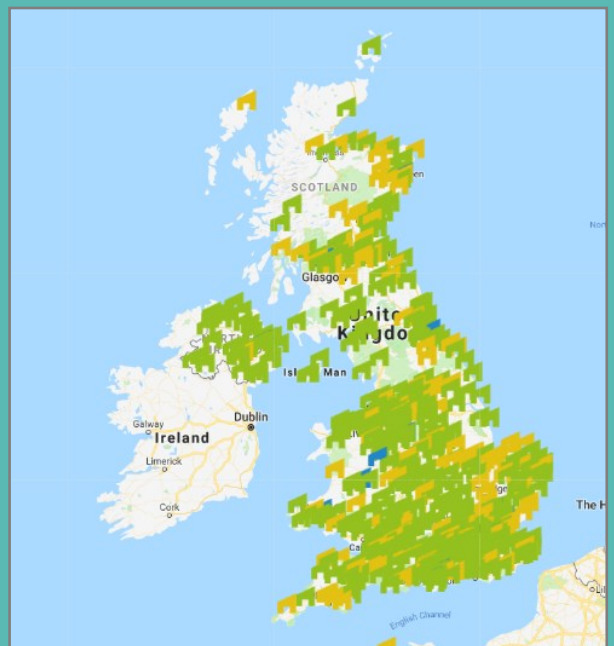
Are we up to date?

Each week we receive several emails and phone call asking where someone's nearest Shed is, we also have hundreds of people looking on our website for information, and 'Find a Shed' is the most popular page.

Sometimes we discover that information for Sheds is out of date. With over 600 Sheds on the map open or in development, it's difficult for us to make sure we're up to date with all your information. Laura is planning to email each Shed on our map over the coming months, but with 600 Sheds, it'll take her some time!

If you have a spare few minutes, please visit our website at www.findashed.org.uk and look at the details for your Shed. It might also be worth looking at a few of your neighbouring Sheds to see if you think their information is correct.

If they need updating, email us at admin@ukmsa.org.uk to make sure they're up to date so that people can find you easily to get involved, donate, or support you.



Three cheers for Megan!

The London to Brighton Challenge will be in its 8th year in May 2019. It is an event of epic proportions, with over 2,500 adventurers of all experience levels and ages taking on this classic Capital to Coast route, testing their grit and determination - and all out to push themselves. Most will walk, but many will jog or run the full 100km, with half and quarter distance options for others.



Megan Godber will be running the challenge to raise money for UKMSA. Megan said *"This May 2019, I thought it would be a great idea to take on a Ultra Marathon and run 60 miles continuously. I will be starting in London and hopefully finishing in Brighton, whether I'm walking crawling or limping, I'm too stubborn to stop!"*

Megan shares her motivation *"My local Shed, Burgess Hill Shed, are helping my family out hugely and I think the charity doesn't get enough publicity. Before I was born my dad suffered a brain tumour and it was touch-and-go if he would make it, I'm super lucky to have him and to be alive myself. It has affected my dad, by leaving him with short term memory loss. My dad's health has deteriorated over the years and has got significantly worse, he had to take ill health redundancy and life for him and my family has been greatly affected since."*



My Dad suffered a stroke 2 years ago now, and this is where the Men's Shed stepped in. The Shed is a safe, social place for my dad to go to - he loves it. He now goes twice a week, it takes the pressure off my mum and has been so beneficial to his health and wellbeing. As a family it has been so nice to know he is with people, doing great activities such as building, making and crafting. It's keeping him busy and healthy and this is why I want to raise as much money as possible for them and raise the profile of the charity.

Without them, my dad would be a lot worse off and I'm therefore really grateful for what the Men's Shed have done."

If you'd like to support Megan's fundraising efforts, you can visit her fundraising page at

justgiving.com/fundraising/meg-godber

You can find out more about the challenge at

london2brightonchallenge.com/

For more details about Burgess Hill Shed, visit bhshed.org.uk/

The UKMSA board and staff team would like to wish Megan the best of luck with her training, and her epic run.

We'll let you know how Megan gets on in our June edition of *Shoulder to Shoulder!*

February 2019 | N. 048

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

 @UKMensSheds |  UK Men's Sheds Association |  ukmenssheds