

SHEDDING LIGHT

NEWSLETTER OF THE KINLOCHLEVEN MEN'S SHED



The Shed is Open

After considerable renovation work on the main building, the **Men's Shed is now open**. Based at the end of Riverside Road, Kinlochleven, the Shed is the focal point for men to meet in Kinlochleven. We are involved in practical and social activities, all one building. An average of seven guys attends each session and are involved in independent or group activities. This could be making a bench or a planter - renovating old equipment - repairing a bike - cleaning up, or just simply chatting to friends.

The Shed is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 10am.
We are also open between 2pm till 4pm on Wednesdays.

Call in and say hello, you will be very welcome.

Community Benches

We recently had the pleasure of donating the first bench constructed within the shed to 'The Glencoe Outdoor Centre'. The bench will be used by youngsters attending outdoor adventure courses throughout the coming year. Grayham Powlesland (a Founder Member) of the men's shed, presented the bench to Chris Williams (Director) of the Outdoor Centre in November. Chris has supported the men's shed from start-up and has provided valuable help and advice in connection with finance and charity annual returns. (See 'Community Seats' on page 2)



Picture: Presenting the bench to Chris Williams



Picture: Time to socialise - morning coffee at the Men's Shed

What is a man's Shed?

JASON SCHROEDER - SMSA Chief Executive Officer



Men have had sheds in Scotland for as long as anyone can remember – yes that's true – but this isn't a garden shed that a husband or Grandad disappears into by himself and his radio. It's quite the opposite.

Men with time on their hands e.g. pre/retired men, men out of work, ex-servicemen, shift and offshore workers or men with disabilities can find it difficult to socialise outside the work environment. The **Men's Shed** is the new place in our modern society offering a healthy and creative solution to the problem.

“The question that our team get asked most at SMSA Shedquarters is 'What is a Men's Shed?' and unfortunately, there are still misconceptions that Scottish Sheds are just a workshop for elderly men and that could not be further from the truth. “The Scottish model serves all men aged 18 or over—from all walks of life and with time on their hands—and offers boundless opportunities for connections, camaraderie and to be an active part of our communities. “Activities are all member-led and the members are all volunteers. The Shed can be for whatever the

member wants it to be—to make friends, share existing skills or to learn new ones, for respite, and/or gain the confidence to participate in walking groups, outings and fishing trips out-with the Shed.

The SMSA was launched in 2015 with the aim of helping new and existing groups to set up and run a Men's Shed in their local communities across Scotland. We are here to provide robust advice, relevant information, good practice models and guidance to over 200 sheds across Scotland. SMSA were delighted to come alongside the leaders of the Men's Shed in Kinlochleven to provide help and support to get their shed open. We wish them well for the future. (Jason)

“it's not about the workshop but the people.”

With the help and support of the SMSA the Kinlochleven Men's Shed was able to overcome the hurdles most groups experience during their start up period. As well as providing valuable experience, they helped us with a £1,500 which enabled us to fund vital equipment and construction materials, to get the shed up and running ready for opening earlier this year. (editor)

COMMUNITY

Playground Benches

One of the key aims of the Men's Shed is to work closely with local organisations to meet the needs of our community. We believe that the circular use of resources can benefit locals and tourists alike, improving the community, visually and individually. When we heard at the shed that parents had nowhere to sit when their kids are using the play areas in the village. We needed to come up with a plan to resolve the issue.



Picture: First Community Bench going to the Play Park.

After first seeking advice from the chairman of the **Kinlochleven Community Benefits Trust**, we made an application to the trust to fund the cost of new timber and materials to construct five bench seats, for positioning around the village. That application was approved and the timber was purchased to construct the first two benches, which will be sited in the play park on Leven Road, early in the new year.

This model of circulating resources, enables the community to provide the funds; those funds enable construction of the benches, which meets the objectives of the Men's Shed by providing projects for isolated men to re-engage with community; then the people in the community and tourists, benefit from the result. **Tony Walters**

You will soon be able to purchase similar Benches & Birdboxes from the Men's Shed direct.

ENVIRONMENT

'John Muir Awards'



When the shed received a call from the High School enquiring if we could help pupils who were studying for a 'John Muir Trust award', we were not quite sure what to expect. But, following a shed visit from the teacher, we committed to making a series of wooden structures to house birds, bats, insects, and butterflies. In addition, they needed bird and squirrel feeders. The men's shed will construct the items, then dismantle them into flat packs and deliver them to the school. The pupils will then assemble their chosen item, ready for siting in the community.



Picture: The First Bug House

The children visited our workshop facilities and told us about the project they are involved with. It was a great opportunity for us to explain what the men's shed is all about. The **John Muir Award** is a fun and effective way to take learning outside, encourage discussions around sustainability and care for wild places – for children and young people. The Award encourages people of all backgrounds to connect with, enjoy and care for wild places.

Donald Davidson

REDUCING WASTE

Repair Café

Manufacturers prefer consumers to replace household items instead of repairing them. Even if they can be repaired, the cost of spares or the requirement of special tools, make it difficult or uneconomical to repair. There are however many items which have simple faults which can easily be resolved. There is an initiative spreading around the world which aims to provide "repair cafes" as a cost-effective alternative to waste. A large proportion of our household products go to landfill or the recycling centre, when they become faulty or unwanted. Often the timber in unrequired furniture can be reused on new projects. Out of fashion items can be reshaped to suit modern tastes which continue to be appreciated for many years to come.

Here at the Men's Shed we plan to open a repair centre by spring 2024. Repair centres are whatever you want them to be, but our research shows the need for them to be a focal point for the community coming together to socialise, get simple repairs done and perhaps lend their skill to help others. The type of service we can offer will depend on what facilities we have available and the skills available to meet customer needs. As soon as we have the shape of the new service, we will get back to you with details in a future issue of '**Shedding Light**'.

SHED MEMBERSHIP

Some days there isn't a lot of work gets done, but over several cups of tea we put the world to rights and have some great banter.

For more details contact:

www.kinlochlevenmensshed.org.uk

HEAD TO THE SHED

BE PART OF YOUR COMMUNITY