



Southern Area Men's Shed Network

Monday 24th October 2016

Hosted by Basingstoke Men's Shed and Reading Men's Shed
at Everest Community Academy, Oxford Way, Basingstoke, RG24 9UP

Present: Mike Brading, Brian Cooke, Tony Smith-Crallan, Myles Sibley, Steve Redrup, D John, Nick Bowden, Graham Waring, Garry Jillians, Peter Eales, Hugh Millar, John Hargrove, Andi Saunders, Derek Nash, John Sibley, Dave Woodhead, Pater Beckham, John Sills, Gerry Johnson, Tony George, Ron Harman, Alan Hawkins

Apologies : John Worley, Dick Moore, Andrew Pottinger, Angus Ross, Lois Prior, Andy Bray, David Richardson

Steve Redrup (SMSN Co-ordinator) chaired the meeting.

1. Welcome

Mike Brading welcomed all to the meeting and gave a short presentation on the newly opened Basingstoke Men's Shed. Tony Smith-Crallan then gave a short presentation on the current status of the Reading (Silvers Workshop) Men's Shed.

2. General Notices

Steve Redrup made a few announcements regarding the change of meeting time and also mentioned that in future any Guest Speakers would be announced and the meeting attendees would decide if they wanted that speaker at the next meeting. As a result of the experience at the previous meeting, it was also agreed that a maximum of one guest speaker would be scheduled at a meeting.

Steve then made the sad announcement about the loss of Chris Davage (Waterlooville Men's Shed Chairman) who died at home on Friday 14th October. Best wishes went to his family, especially his wife Lyn. A minutes silence was then held.

During this discussion – somewhat ironically - sad news was received of the passing of Ian Leask, a member of the Reading shed (The Silvers Workshop). Ian had recently undergone a biopsy on one of his lungs to identify why he had been suffering from breathlessness and all had hoped he was recovering well.

3. General Shed News/Updates

Hayling Island Shed and Old Portsmouth Shed have recently become a CIO. Some discussion took place on what it means to become a CIO.

Advantages of becoming a CIO included being excused VAT when purchasing certain materials and reduced charges if applying for planning permission.

Colden Common Shed also became a CIO in July. Planning issues have arisen there as the Shed is on Church property and close to a felt-roofed structure, therefore any new building has to be a certain distance from the other. There are also size limits before more stringent regulations come in to play. But, there are ways around this, including building smaller structures and linking them with a canopy etc. Building Regulations also apply differently if the building is for habitation i.e. is heated.

Good advice: consult early with local planning officers; attend a Trustees' training course; and, speak to/lobby your local MP!

Also – given the nature of much ensuing discussion – that Shedders' should post their knowledge and experiences on the SMSN Forum so that ALL can benefit from reading it.

Steve Redrup also gave an update relating to a discussion at a previous meeting regarding the consideration of people who are disadvantaged and the circumstances of a Shed being asked to 'look after' a person who would normally be accompanied by their Carer. It is entirely reasonable to refuse to do so given the need to be qualified to formally care for someone. Also, to query the Carer's responsibilities and whether it would be a dereliction of their duty towards their charge/patient should they elect to leave them in others' company. It was also mentioned that a document had been sent by David Richardson (not present) from West Sussex Community Sheds entitled "Agencies / Services referring to a Men's Shed". This is only a draft and a copy will be sent with the minutes. The main points raised were wording of the sections "A Men's Shed Is.." and "A Men's Shed is Not..". Its key point was that a Men's Shed is not a service provided for men, but activities which are organised and resourced by men. It then poses the question to the Agency or Service "How might you or your agency support someone who would like to attend a Men's Shed". The document (or your own variation of it) may be useful to discuss with an agency or service when such a situation arises.

4. Updates from Active Work Groups

There's a new page on the SMSN.org.uk website (screenshot of covering page was attached to agenda) entitled Woodwork & Craft Plans Gallery. Click on a topic there to learn more.

This page contains several hundred plans and diagrams for both woodwork and craft projects which can be printed and used freely. All plans and drawings are in the Public Domain and therefore there are no issues with copyright and royalties.

A new, weekly, Forum Newsletter has been developed. It will be sent out on a Saturday, provided information has been posted that week, with links that can take readers to topics shown. This will be a good way to get notices etc to all who subscribe. So any shed or member needs only to post a item on the forum and it will automatically appear on the next Newsletter and sent to all network subscribers.

5. Feedback from Birmingham Shed Fest UK event

(Who didn't go and why, who went and what they thought of it, and whether Brian Cooke felt it achieved what was intended.)

General Points Included: Venue okay for some, not so for others; near Moor St Station so ok by train; no accessibility between floors for wheelchair users to attend event sessions; might have gone if better info sent out in advance, including the agenda.

Brian Cooke said the planning considered up to 170 possible attendees with 150 anticipated – but around 100 attended. There were speakers from Northern Ireland and Australia, but no shared table at which they could discuss/receive Q&A. The Wales Sheds appear to be in some disarray over their structure/governance.

Update from National Men's Shed Committee (Brian Cooke): Some discussion had previously arisen as to are naming "Men In Sheds" or "Men's Sheds". Brian explained that AGE UK gained right to the logo Men in Sheds and made £1500 available to any shed set up under their jurisdiction. Unfortunately some/many of those sheds have become unviable and had to close. UKMSA have encouraged a more 'bottom up' approach to the establishment of a Shed and these mostly used the name Men's Sheds.

Discussions took place about possible future venues of Shed Fest UK and the impact of the development of more regional groups such as SMSN. For example, national events might take place within the geographical area of a regional group and perhaps every 3 or 4 years at a central location, such as Birmingham. Food for thought and members were encouraged to post their thoughts e.g. on the Forum.

Trade organisations, such as B&Q, Screwfix, and Axminster Tools are generally receptive to being approached (advice was to go to their Trade Desk) to set up accounts and seek discount arrangements.

Mike Jenn has retired and Karl Demian (Interim Chair and RVS), is sitting in. UKMSA is also seeking an Administrator (or two – big workload).

6. Open to the Floor – What do we expect from the National Organisation

Quite a bit of members' expectations already covered, but included more and better information/advice on legal issues, insurance (especially Public Liability) and Health and Safety.

There was also mention of general guides and tips on Planning Regulations / Restrictions which new sheds need to keep in mind if constructing new shed buildings.

On machine safety, Reading (The Silvers Workshop) outlined the system they have introduced to ensure members can safely use powered tools and machines. They prohibit members using them unless they are either supervised or have been assessed as safe to do so by one of their three nominated Assessors. Tony Smith-Crallan endorsed the offer to make their information, including their Health & Safety Manual, available to all who are interested. It was suggested that these could be added to the documents already available on the Network Forum.

Also on machine safety, Axminster Tools are looking at a possible system for checking / assessing, tools / machines on behalf of UKMSA- affiliated Sheds and also to hold associated 'training days' in the safe operation / use of powered tools and machines.

7. Any Other Business

Tony Smith-Crallan agreed to make available a projector for use at future SMSN meetings as a result of a request made by Steve Redrup.

Steve Redrup informed the meeting that (as a result of Shed Fest) the company Hugo Fox have requested that they could present their Free Website Services at a future Network Meeting.

General agreement was given by the meeting that Hugo Fox could have a 15 minute slot at the next SMSN meeting.

8. Next Meeting

Eastleigh Shed have offered to host the next meeting.

No date has been fixed yet but it is expected to be near the end of Feb or early March 2017.

9. Meeting Closed at 3:35

Agencies/services referring to a Men's Shed

- You've heard about Men's Sheds and perhaps discovered there's a Shed near to you
- You'll perhaps have in mind someone you're supporting, who could benefit from joining and taking part in the activities of a Shed (Five Ways to Wellbeing?)

A Shed is usually a building, a social space - but essentially it's about a network of relationships between men. Here are some other ways Sheds have been defined:

A Men's Shed is...

- a group of men working on projects of their own choosing at their own pace, in a safe, friendly and inclusive venue
- a place to capture or pass on skills, knowledge and craftsmanship
- somewhere to come and just sit for a while, have a chat over a cup of tea, a place to feel at home, to have a laugh, socialise, pursue practical interests and to stay active

A Men's Shed is not...

- a health programme, but being a 'Shedder' may improve your health and wellbeing
- an information service, but a Shed may be a good place to find out things from other men
- a training programme, but you may gain new knowledge and skills and pass on what you know to others

Key point...

- a Men's Shed is not service provided for men, but activities which are organised and resourced by men

Before discussing with someone how being part of a Shed group might be of interest to them:

- Contact the Shed and arrange to visit on one of its working days
- Speak to some of those involved – about what motivated them to come to the Shed, the activities they enjoy, and how they feel being at the Shed benefits them
- Get to understand a little about the group dynamic – how those involved interact and share with each other
- Sheds come in all shapes and sizes - note things like physical access, any limitations to the building/facilities or on the numbers of those attending etc.
- Appreciate that a Shed is a 'working environment', where being alert to health and safety matters is everyone's concern

Consider...

- How might you or your agency/service support someone who would like to attend a Men's Shed – initially or perhaps over a longer period?
- That to remain viable, local Sheds rely on goodwill, financial and other support from across their communities – is there a way in which your agency/service might help?

Help is available to new Sheds groups starting up

West Sussex Community Sheds is a small programme hosted within the County Council. The focus is on working with others to promote and support the Sheds idea; towards encouraging the setting up and development of Sheds groups

across West Sussex. A particular aim is to see more Men's Sheds establish so that as has already happened in some areas of the county, opportunities are locally created for men of all ages to organise; to enjoy the camaraderie of working on individual and community projects; to learn and socialise together in the shared space of a Shed.

West Sussex Community Sheds

0330 22 28677 or 07736 007692 Sheds@westsussex.gov.uk

(voicemail & email usually monitored and responded to on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays)

