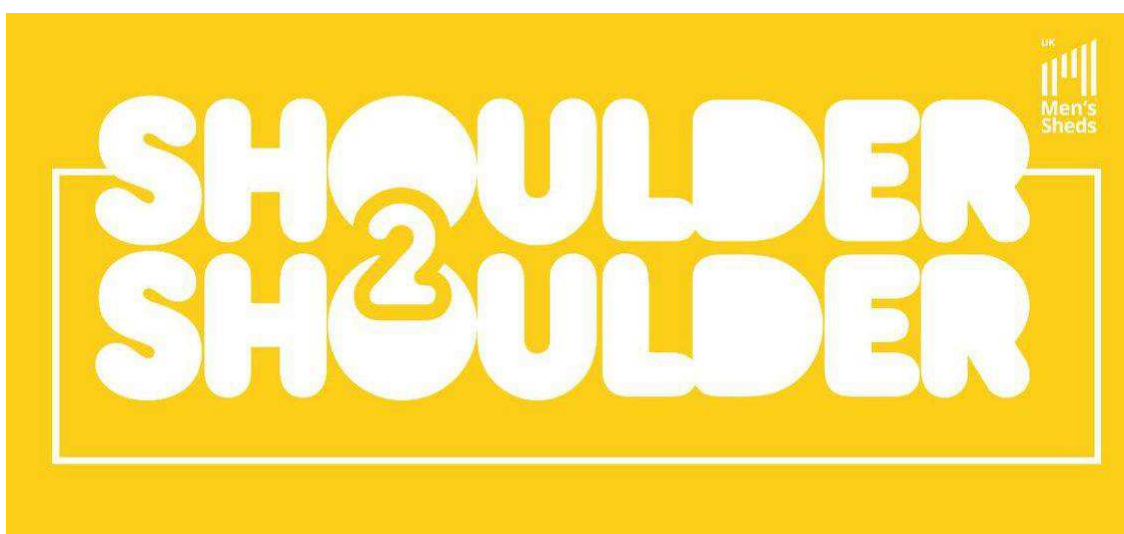


[View this email in your browser](#)



#94 April 2023



Birthdays are exciting, and if you weren't aware, UKMSA is turning 10 this year! Our team are busy working away getting things ready for our Shed of the Year Awards and ShedFest 2023 - two great opportunities for celebrating some of the amazing things that have happened in Sheds over the last year, and the last decade.

In this edition of the newsletter, find out how to book your FREE ShedFest tickets and where to go to find out more details as they're released. We celebrate one of the 10 year old Men's Sheds, and it's competition time in partnership with The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry - a film about supporting friends through tough times, just like Sheds do. There's information to help you stay healthy and an opportunity to celebrate the Coronation and your local community. To get all this great hot-off-the-press news and more, read on...



Thank you to all the Sheds, Shed supporters and partners who have submitted nominations for Shed of the Year Awards 2023 which are being sponsored by [Tite-Fix](#). Entries are now closed. It's really encouraging to have a record number of Sheds and Shedders nominated, because we know Sheds are doing a fantastic job of supporting your Shedders, their families and communities to be healthier and happier places.



We are very excited and busy putting together a great celebration in the Palace of Westminster on 23rd May. If you've been nominated for an award, make sure we don't land in your junk inbox - if you are shortlisted you'll be invited to come join the celebrations!



Anyone know what the collective noun for Shedders is? [Answers on a postcard...](#)
ShedFest 2023 is the [UK Men's Sheds Association](#) annual celebration of Men's Sheds and Shedders across the UK.

This year we are **expanding the exhibition** and having **demonstrations of skills** for Shedders running alongside the **development focussed workshops** for Shed Leaders.

The exhibition will open from 9am, with a welcome at 10am and concluding at 4pm. UK Men's Sheds Association's AGM will be held in the afternoon as part of the day's programme.

Book your tickets now to receive updates about the programme.

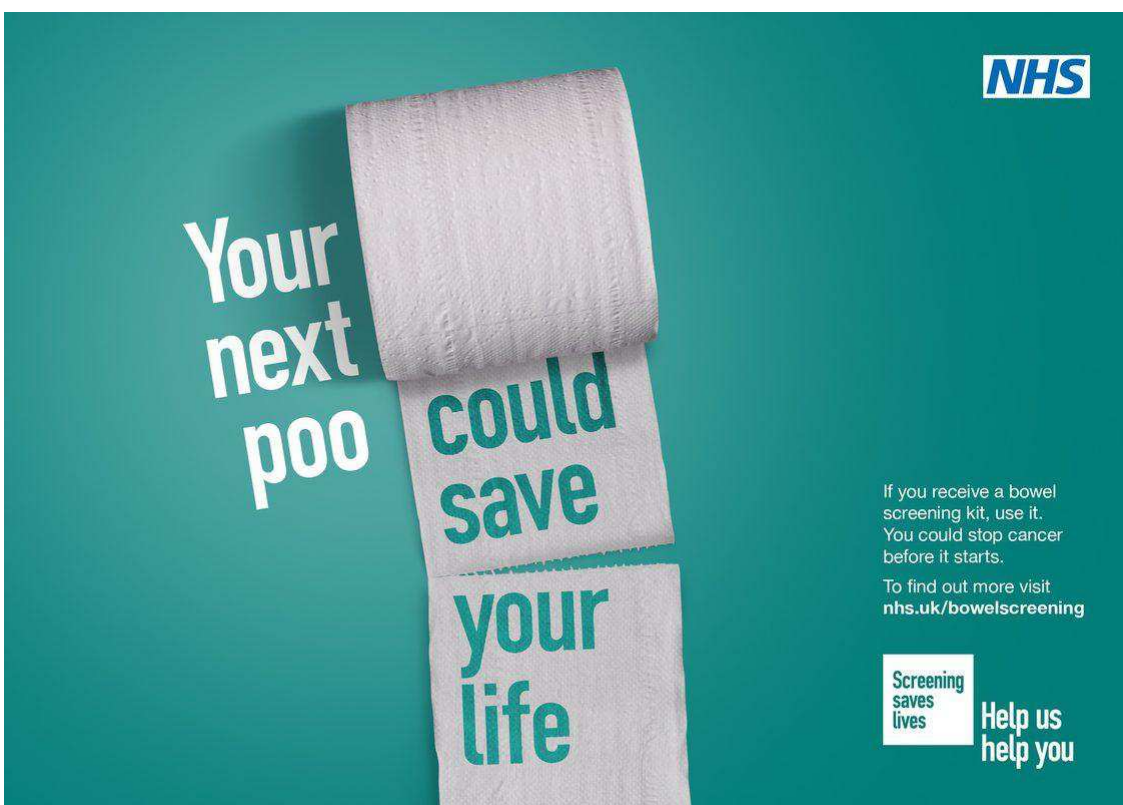
[Tickets are FREE, and can be booked through Eventbrite here.](#)

For more information, contact the team on 0300 772 9626, or email admin@ukmsa.org.uk.

We look forward to seeing many of you there, whatever we're called when we congregate.



Health and Wellbeing Spotlight



The UK is not United with regards to Bowel Screening

The current status on bowel screening across the UK is as follows:-

include people aged 50-59.

- In Scotland, screening starts from age 50 until you're 74.
- In Wales you will be invited to take part in bowel cancer screening if you're aged between 55 and 74.
- In Northern Ireland people aged of 60 to 74 are invited to take part in screening.
- Across the UK you will be invited to take part in screening every two years.

So that's clear?

What is clear is this:-

- Make sure your GP practice has your correct address so your bowel screening kit is posted to the right place.
- If you live in England, and you're 75 or over, you can ask for a kit every 2 years by phoning the free bowel cancer screening helpline on 0800 707 60 60. (For the rest of the UK, I think you contact your GP)
- If you are worried you may have symptoms of bowel cancer (at any age), go to see your GP. (See symptoms at bowelcanceruk.org.uk/about-bowel-cancer/symptoms/)
- Bowel cancer is more common in people over the age of 50, but it can affect anyone of any age.
- The current bowel screening kit is much simpler to use than the older version. (One sample needed, rather than three).
- More people than ever are completing their bowel screening tests - Over two thirds of all kits sent out are now returned, a considerably better returns rate than 10 years ago.
- Nine out of 10 people will survive bowel cancer if detected in the earliest stages of the disease.
- The National Clinical Director for Cancer, Professor Peter Johnson, said: "I would urge everyone who is sent a kit to return their test as quickly as they can, because this can detect the early signs of bowel cancer and ensure that anyone affected can get treatment for the disease as soon as possible. Don't die of embarrassment."

The 19th-century American writer, Josh Billings, once said "*A good reliable set of bowels is worth more to a man than any quantity of brains.*"

Double Digits

As UKMSA turns 10 this year, we've been making contact with some of the most established Sheds, some of whom have been around longer than we have. Throughout this year we want to celebrate all that Sheds have been doing for the past decade.



Happy Birthday Patchway Shed

Happy Birthday Patchway Shed, who have been Shedding near Bristol since 2013. We asked Martin Castree if he could share a little of their history and journey with us.



Back in the olden days, Kate Ross from the Southern Brooks Community Partnership was given the job of starting an initiative called Precious Time - a strategy for reducing loneliness and isolation in older age groups. Kate knew it would be simple to get the more mature ladies of the community to join pretty much anything. BUT how to engage with the older men well that was a completely different prospect.

So she thought where might she be able to find older men and had the idea that many might be allotment holders or belong to gardening club. Fortunately, Patchway has two large allotments sites so she put up a poster or three and hoped for the best.

Just two chaps turned up to a meeting on a cold January morning (Founder members Les Brooks and Keith Williams, who still comes to Shed today).

Another meeting was held in February and this time five gentlemen turned up and the first order of business was to find premises. With support from Patchway Town Council, it was suggested we use the sports pavilion in a local park which was empty all week and only really used at weekend by the footballers and cricketers.

After gaining a couple of grants from local charities we managed to buy some tools and workmates and Patchway Men's Shed was up and running in the May of 2013.

belongings in, but with a bit of a struggle we managed to get everything in it, although we did have to tidy up at the end of every session.

Over the next three year various benches began to appear and lots of man glitter, which not so appreciated by the footballers and sportsmen.

Then in 2016 we were asked to leave! The Sports Council had agreed to fund a new sports pavilion and the Shed did not really fit in with their plans. Again, Patchway Town Council came up trumps and even donated and delivered a spare Portacabin for the Shed to use at one of their allotment sites on Blakney Road.

Over time the site was transformed into a workable Shed but we were very short of indoor space. Many wood stores were constructed, as well as a couple of large work benches which were the hub of the activity.

Now some seven years later we are about to expand the undercover area by building a barn with two more shipping containers which in time will house the more techie bits of kit that we would like to play with, like a CNC machine, laser cutter and 3D printers.

Over the years the Shed has been a life line to some of our members – with one our Shedders telling us “I really look forward to Wednesday as it is the only day I go out.” It’s also been supporting their families too – with one wife telling us “The Shed has saved our marriage.”



Is your Shed celebrating a milestone birthday this year? Share it with us, and email the story to newsletter@ukmsa.org.uk.

Celebrating
The Coronation of King Charles III
and
Ten Years of the UK Men’s Sheds Association



UK Men's Sheds Association has joined [#TheBigHelpOut](#) to celebrate the Coronation of His Royal Highness King Charles III in a way to support the promotion of Sheds.

Over the next few months we are suggesting Sheds tell us about any open days they are planning, and if not perhaps to consider one.

We will then place these events on the www.thebighelpout.org.uk website and hopefully this will help more people to know about Men's Sheds, how to get involved in Sheds and to continue to celebrate the Men's Shed movement.

IT IS ALL ABOUT LEGACY - We realise the Coronation is very soon, we are using the Coronation as the starting point to celebrate your events, so all the events you have planned in the coming months, please let us know.

For each event we will need to know

Title

Cause

Requirements

Cover Image

Description

Celebrating Men's Sheds is a key role for UKMSA and we hope this will add value to your Shed and Shedder's experience. To get your open day shared, please email the details above to admin@ukmsa.org.uk.

Stress Awareness Month



Stress Awareness Month is observed annually in April to increase awareness about the causes and effects of stress, as well as ways to manage and reduce stress levels. It aims to promote healthy coping mechanisms and stress-reducing activities, such as exercise, meditation, and spending time with loved ones. The month-long observance also aims to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues and encourage individuals to seek help if they experience chronic stress or related mental health concerns.

[Read on our website how to identify the signs of stress, and what you can do here.](#)

Sponsored Content

An advertisement for Zurich's mental health initiative. It features a circular image of three people (two men and one woman) sitting around a table, engaged in a painting activity. The background is blue with white and yellow geometric shapes. The Zurich logo is in the bottom left corner.

Positive projects to boost mental health

Collaborating with UK Men's Sheds, we've created an article on how getting hands on can help with your mental and physical health

[Find out more](#)

To find out more about our insurance for men's sheds visit: www.zurich.co.uk/charity

Climbing high to raise awareness and funds for Men's Health

raise money for UKMSA for a very personal reason.

One of the things we're always aware of is how many lives can be impacted by a Shed, not just Shedders, but their families and communities too. We'll be following Kate throughout this year as she takes on an incredible challenge. Here she shares a little of her challenge and motivation.



"In November 2023 I'm completing the challenge of walking to Everest base camp with a group of blind, visually impaired and fully sighted adults. We are traveling with Venture Force, a company that arrange trips throughout the world.

I've been registered blind since birth however my parents encouraged me to not let this stop me pursuing my ambitions. Aged 17 I trekked in the Anti-Atlas mountains in Morocco with a group of visually impaired and sighted teenagers, so when I heard about the Everest Base Camp opportunity I knew I'd love the experience and challenge.

I'm fundraising for UK Mens Sheds Association (UKMSA) alongside the trip because I want to help men who are struggling with their well-being. My target is £5364.00 - as base camp is 5,364m above sea level.

I feel strongly about helping men with their mental health. When I was 17 my dad committed suicide after struggling with depression and alcoholism. The trip to Morocco was four months after my dad died. I found the training, preparation and the achievement of climbing mountains on the trip itself helped my mental health during this time and gave me something to focus on.

I feel that if UKMSA had been around when my dad was suffering, he would have found their support beneficial. He enjoyed fixing motorbikes and playing pool. I think if there had been somewhere he could have done that or something similar with others in similar situations to his who he could talk to this would have really helped him. Ending loneliness and isolation for men in general, but particularly older men, is something that is vitally important and will improve the lives of many men.

I'm fundraising for UKMSA to support men struggling with their mental health, to stop men feeling lonely and to show men it's ok not to be ok.

To follow Kate's progress, and sponsor her, visit gofund.me/b129a682

UKMSA Partner Spotlight

The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry

PILGRIM

EXCLUSIVELY IN CINEMAS **APRIL 28**

The promotional image features a central red t-shirt with the word "PILGRIM" in white. To the left is a book titled "The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry" by Rachel Joyce, with a cover image of an elderly couple. In front of the t-shirt is a silver water flask with the book title and a yellow compass. To the right is a dark green tote bag with the book title. At the bottom, the text "EXCLUSIVELY IN CINEMAS APRIL 28" is displayed in large, bold letters.

To celebrate our partnership with, and the release of, *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry*, the UK Men's Sheds Association is giving away five prize bundles that include a Pilgrim T-Shirt, book, water flask, tote bag and compass.

In order to win one of these great prizes you need to answer the following questions – How many Sheddies laid head to toe would it take to cover the 466 miles that Harold Fry walks from his home in Kingsbridge, Devon to the hospice in Berwick-upon-Tweed if the average height of a Shedder was 5ft 9in?

Using the ["Find a Shed"](https://www.menssheds.org.uk) service on the UKMSA website – www.menssheds.org.uk – can you tell us the nearest Shed to Kingsbridge and to the one nearest to Berwick-upon-Tweed?

9th May and the five winners will be drawn at random from all those that have sent in the correct responses to both questions.

The Head Shed!

During Mental Health Awareness Week, Garon Park Shed has invited the renowned Essex comic, John Ryan, to give his sideways look at health and wellbeing to raise awareness of the issues around mental health in an event called 'The Head Shed'.



On Wednesday 17th May at [The Boundary](#) in Garon Park, Southend, John will be sharing some stories and messages in his unique and unforgettable style. Attendees are guaranteed to have a great laugh and go away knowing more about their own health. [Find out more about the event, and how to buy tickets here.](#)

UKMSA Partner Spotlight



**Did you know one
Shedder could
raise £270 a year for
your Shed?**



Did you know your Shed can receive funding every time your Shedders and their families shop online? Their everyday shopping can transform into a continual income stream for your Shed. You can raise up to £200 over a year, just from one Shedder doing their weekly food shop, raise up to £40 each time someone switches their

Merger of Wessex Insurance and E&G Insurance

A message from John Mitchell, Managing Director of Wessex Insurance

On March 1st 2023 Wessex Insurance Brokers Limited took over the operations of E&G Insurance (Export and General Insurance Services Ltd). The shareholders of E&G decided that they no longer wished to own and operate an insurance broking business, partly due to the increasing burden of regulation and reporting required by the FCA, but also due to their desire to focus on other businesses within their group.

Wessex is the logical home for E&G as we have also been insuring Men's Sheds for several years. Indeed John Mitchell, founder of Wessex, was MD of E&G from 2012 to 2018 and actually set up E&G's original Shed insurance scheme, so we do have a full understanding of what Sheds are all about.

Wessex is part of the FR Ball group of companies - a family-owned insurance broking group – with 28 staff, including dedicated accounts and claims teams. Things should therefore run more smoothly for former E&G clients going forwards.

If you are an E&G client, you need to do nothing until renewal when Wessex will provide you with a renewal quote – generally priced the same as last year. We are changing the insurer from the China Taiping Insurance Company that E&G used, to an insurer called Stonefort Insurance. Wessex and Stonefort have been partners for many years, with Stonefort underwriting schemes for Archaeologists, Makerspaces, Repair Cafés, environmental charities, businesses located in railway arches etc., so they are well known to us and we know that they understand all about Sheds.

Our plans are to continue to develop our Shed insurance capability. Towards the end of the summer we will be launching a new website where Sheds can buy insurance, access policy documents and download other relevant information. Of course that won't take away the 'personal touch' of phone calls and Shed visits for those who don't wish to embrace the electronic age!

John Mitchell has always been passionate about Sheds since his first conversations with Mike Jenn in 2014. We are here to help, so please get in touch at any time.

With questions or queries – or just a catch-up chat - please give us a call or send an email. The office numbers are 01256 770440 and 0208 2550617 and John's mobile

John Mitchell: john@wessex-insurance.com

Simon Mason: simon@wessex-insurance.com

Rachel Evans: rachel@wessex-insurance.com

Ruth Evans: ruth@wessex-insurance.com

Emma Mitchell: emma@wessex-insurance.com

0208 2550617 / 01256 770440 / 07768 865983

UKMSA Partner Spotlight

Have you ever found it hard to talk about gambling, or to seek support? You're not alone. Worrying that they'll be judged is one of the biggest barriers that prevents people seeking help and talking openly about their experience.

If you're worried about how gambling is making you feel, or it's affecting someone you care about, talking to someone can really help. So, let's open up about gambling.



A useful starting point can be understanding if gambling is causing difficulties, by understanding the early signs of gambling harms. Things like feeling you're spending too much time or money on gambling, or that it's always on your mind. Maybe you're feeling worried or guilty about your gambling, or have been keeping it a secret?

[GambleAware's short quiz](#) can help you understand how gambling might be affecting you or someone you care about. It only takes a few minutes to complete, all answers provided are anonymous and you'll be provided with free, tailored support.

You can find this quiz, plus other advice, tools and support on the [GambleAware website](#).

Some help for you and your Shed during a time when costs and bills are rising

causing many people, including Shedders, to experience some challenges with the rising prices of utilities and household items.



A member at one Shed has come across a way to help out with a money saving opportunity that not only provides a personal benefit but also offers a way of raising income for Sheds.

We'll let John tell his own story;

"I've been a Shedder since October 2014. Like many, I am retired and therefore keen to keep my bills down – particularly in the current financial climate. At the end of 2021 I came across UW as a utility provider. Some research led me to believe that they have a compelling offer, and I signed up as a customer.

The company also offers the opportunity to earn as well. Combining these two led me to the thought that I might be able to help Shedders save on bills, and to help them raise some funds for their own Shed – always welcome, I'm sure.

My own personal savings since early January 2022 are about £535 (I'll explain how when we speak) and such savings (or more) may well be possible for many Shedders. If you would like to see what savings might be possible for YOU – AND help generate income for your Shed, please just email me at John.D.Philp@blueyonder.co.uk with some contact detail and I'll get touch, or please text, whatsapp or call me on 07425 561578."

Please note that this is not an endorsement from UKMSA but we thought it sounded like something that we should share with members so that they can discuss directly with John if they feel that it is something that would benefit themselves and their Shed.

We can all play a part in protecting older men from domestic abuse

"For a long time, I didn't try and access anything, partly because I was in denial and embarrassed, particularly because it was a woman. I felt trapped."

The quote above reflects what many older men go through when they experience domestic abuse, an issue which is often hidden and seldom talked about.

Figures show that up to a third of people who experience abuse are male, but this is something that is not really reflected in the way that abuse is talked about, or the ways

Stopping the abuse of older people is one of my priorities as Commissioner, and I want to make sure that any older person who experiences abuse – whether they're male or female – can get the help and support they need.

A key part of this is making sure that the right policies and resources are in place to protect and support older people experiencing abuse, and I will continue my work to ensure the Welsh Government and other public bodies deliver the action I called for when I published my report examining older men's experiences of abuse last year. A great deal of progress has been made since then, which I'll be highlighting in an update report planned for later this year, but there is still more to do to make sure that older men can get the help they need.

Alongside the right policies, we need to make sure there's a better understanding across society of the ways that abuse can affect older people, the signs that may suggest abuse is taking place, and the kinds of help and support that's available. Alongside this, we also need to tackle the stigma that often prevents older people, in particular older men, from reporting abuse or seeking help.

Abuse can take many forms – including physical abuse, emotional / psychological abuse, financial abuse and controlling behaviours – and can be very difficult to recognise, even by those being abused. But by knowing the signs to look out for that could indicate someone is experiencing abuse, we can all play a part in helping to protect older people from abuse.

This could include physical signs, such as unexplained bruises or injuries; changes in behaviour, such as becoming withdrawn or not leaving the house; changes in contact with family or friends; or changes in spending habits.

If you're ever concerned about someone, you can contact your council's safeguarding team or a domestic abuse support service for advice and support. To find details of services in your area, you can visit my Abuse Support Services Directory – www.olderpeople.wales/support-directory/ – which includes contact information for a wide range of services operating both locally and nationally in Wales. You can also get in touch with my own Advice and Assistance Team, who will be able to help.

It's also crucial that someone who is experiencing abuse feels able to disclose what they're going through, so they can find the support they need to escape and do not come to further harm.

Men's Sheds members can also play a really important role here. I've visited several Sheds throughout Wales and I've seen for myself the huge amount of support that members provide to one another, and the positive impact this makes.

may enable a disclosure, as well as peer support that can make an invaluable difference as someone recovers from their experiences and rebuilds their life.

When someone is experiencing abuse, standing shoulder to shoulder with them could be just what they need.

Heléna Herklots CBE
Older People's Commissioner for Wales

Places to go for Support

Older People's Commissioner for Wales Advice and Assistance Team:
03442 640 670

Commissioner's Abuse Support Services Directory: www.olderpeople.wales/support-directory/

Live Fear Free Helpline (support available 24/7): 0808 80 10 800

Hourglass Cymru (service for older people): 0808 808 8141

Not in Wales? You can access support through Respect – a Men's Advice Line – at mensadviceline.org.uk/getting-support/

Are you interested in improving support for people living with cancer through innovation?

Macmillan Cancer Support's Innovation Team test and develop innovative ideas and approaches to find new ways of helping people living with cancer. We want to ensure people with a lived experience of cancer shape and influence our innovation work.



If you have a personal experience of cancer and/or experience of caring for or supporting someone with cancer, this is a great opportunity to bring your knowledge

Together we will discover even better ways to help people with cancer – could your voice and experience help us do this? Then why not join our [Innovation Community](#)?

For more information or to get involved, please contact us at innovationcommunity@macmillan.org.uk.

Fancy a chance to be on TV?

CALLING ALL HOBBYISTS WITH A PASSION FOR MAKING, CREATING AND TINKERING!

Do you have an impressive hobby project that you'd love to show off? Have a problematic project that needs expert advice? Or do you want to take your crafting skills to another level?

Whether it's a toy train or full sized plane, a lovingly restored vintage motorbike, puppets, woodcutters, upholsters, glass makers, automatons and any home made invention; no matter how big or small we'd love to either help you perfect your project or show off your unique creation!

Our Travelling Toolshed is here to help!

Get in touch with your **name**, **contact** information and **details** about your project:

castingtoolshed@hungrybear.tv



Sheds in the News

Here are some of the latest stories about Sheds and Shedding from across the globe we've seen this month...

- [Bingley Five Rise Locks wood used to make Bingley church crosses](#)
- [Shop Setup for the Wheelchair Woodworker](#)



Don't forget to share your news stories with us. Email the team at newsletter@ukmsa.org.uk so we can share your news.



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