

Scottish Men's Shed Association funding at risk

The Scottish Men's Shed Association was launched in November 2015 with the aim of helping new and existing groups to set up and run a Men's Shed in their local town or community.

The association is there to give a helping hand to anyone looking for assistance or more information on what it means to develop and run a Men's Shed.

The overall purpose of the organisation is to ensure that all men in Scotland have access to opportunities for increased citizenship and community development through the Scottish Men's Sheds Association to impact positively on their health – both mental and physical – wellbeing and education of them and their communities.





With Tim Green the SMSA Development Officer cutting the cake on opening day

Tony Jones of the Forth Bridges Men's Shed said: "The newly established Forth Bridges Men's Shed based in South Queensferry has doubled in membership in only two months to 19, gaining 2 or 3 new members almost every week, with most members living in the northern part of Rural West Edinburgh.

"The Shed meets in the Community Centre located behind South Queensferry Primary School and we were greatly assisted in establishing the group by the [Scottish Men's Shed Association](#).

"The huge benefit we are finding with our Shed is in assisting with men's mental health issues. In a short time this has helped to reduce social isolation and loneliness and helped them to reconnect with the community. The Shed is well regarded in the local community and members have helped to replace a rowing boat planter outside the local library and

are currently refurbishing benches in the local Cemetery as a long term project, in addition to completing other tasks in the local area.





Getting some pool time in

“As well as helping the community, this also contributes to the members’ own feeling of self worth, makes use of a lifetime of acquired skills, and helps to avoid mental health issues. We have support of the local surgery, including mental health nurse who was delighted to hear of our existence and is planning to use social prescribing for appropriate patients.

“Although members are already enjoying the benefits of the Men’s Shed movement, this enjoyment is under threat as £75,000 core funding for the SMSA has been withdrawn by The Scottish Government. This withdrawal will not only affect the seven Sheds currently operating in the Edinburgh area but the more than 200 Sheds found in all 32 local authority areas across Scotland.

“Now should probably not be the time to abandon and disinvest in this successful men’s health movement that is voluntarily

engaging with, and reaching, men and changing and saving lives. The benefits of Men's Sheds have been researched by Glasgow Caledonian University's four-year research 'Sheds for Sustainable Development Project', work which has been warmly welcomed.





Marking their territory...

“Men’s Sheds should be vibrant community spaces bringing people together to take part in practical activities, learn new skills or simply have a laugh and a cup of tea.

“Unfortunately this may not be possible without the support of the SMSA”.

The SMSA is not affiliated to any other UK Men’s Sheds Associations and works exclusively in Scotland as a registered Scottish charity, ‘In Scotland – For Scotland’. For more information <https://scottishmsa.org.uk/>

Thanks to Forth Bridges Men’s Shed’s Tony Jones for the words and Bill Gray and Tony Jones for the photos.

