Information and advice to set up and run a Men’s Shed project.

Developed by Maldon and District CVS and the team at the Maldon Shed
Foreword

Working for the past ten years with Maldon and District CVS I have seen amazing dedicated people working, often as volunteers, for the benefit of the community and it never ceases to amaze me the contributions people give to a cause that inspires them.

This has been reinforced even more through the CVS’s involvement with the Shed movement. We didn’t set off to be part of an international movement in fact when we began on the journey towards the Maldon Shed we had never heard of Men's Sheds. Our plans for the Shed came about through recognition that the district wasn’t offering a community activity for men it was the subsequent research that led us to the Men's Shed movement.

Throughout this journey I have been amazed by the widespread support we have received from all corners of the community. The Shed project has inspired across all sectors and demographics we have had support and input from local statutory partners, the local voluntary sector and local businesses as well as a range of inspiring individuals.

The success of the Maldon Shed has come about not through the expertise of Maldon and District CVS staff or the support of the local Council, it isn’t due to shiny marketing materials or a high profile launch event. The success of our project is due to the hard work and dedication of the Shedders themselves, the knowledge, expertise and offer of friendship that they bring to the table. This toolkit outlines some of the things we came across whilst setting up the Shed and provides some background information. We hope it will inspire and equip others to replicate the project in their local area.

Sarah Laskar
Director - Maldon and District CVS
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The story of Sheds
The Men’s Shed movement started in Australia in 1997. The first Shed was Lane Cove Community Shed in New South Wales set up for “shedless blokes”. This small community project marked the start of an international movement providing a social community space for men of all ages and abilities. The Australian Men’s Shed movement was officially set up ten years later in 2007 and there are now over 1,000 Sheds in Australia supporting around 175,000 individuals.

In the UK over 50% of homes have sheds and they are generally the domain of the men of the house and 26% of shed owners say they spend time in their Sheds avoiding their partners1. Generally sheds are a place of solitude and reflection but there may come a time when the joy of solitude evolves into the pain of loneliness.

Compared with women, men are at greater risk of isolation, Older men are more likely to be socially isolated than women of a similar age due to less contact with family, greater reluctance to join clubs for older people and less likely to ask for support2.

Loneliness and isolation is increasingly being recognised as an important health issue amongst men. It isn’t just about people having someone to talk to; loneliness has a serious knock on effect on an individual’s mental and physical health. A report produced by the Campaign to End Loneliness has found that isolation has a comparable effect on mortality with well-known health factors such as obesity and smoking. It can increase blood pressure; increase the risk of the onset of disability, cognitive decline and depression3.

With all of this taken into account there can be little doubt projects like men’s Sheds can add value to a community but what makes the Sheds so special is that they are not health projects or social care projects or for people with a particular label. You do not need to be lonely Peter or depressed Jim to go along to a Shed. You can simply be Peter the retired builder or Jim who has always wanted to learn woodwork or Frank who doesn’t mind making the tea.

People find their way to Sheds for many different reasons and once there they benefit from the social connections that are invariably made and through that they stay well and healthy and their lives are enriched.

1: Research from Cuprinol
2: The Emerging Crisis for Older Men. International Longevity Centre and Independent Age. 2014
3: Campaign to End loneliness www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/threat-to-health/
Section 2: Shed Structure
Do you need a Shed?
It’s easy to say yes your community needs a Shed, in Australia there are over 175,000 people involved with Sheds and can over a hundred thousand Australians really be wrong?
Before setting up a Shed it is important to consider whether one is needed in your local area. Setting up a Shed can be hard work and so before setting foot on the road towards considering funding, governance and set up have a look at whether a Shed is needed and would be successful in your area.

The chances are that isolation amongst older people is an issue in your local area as it is a nationally recognised issues occurring just as often in urban environments as the rural areas more commonly associated with isolation. However are there already community projects for men in the local area that you could get involved with and support or add value to?

Your local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) will hold information on local groups and the services they offer and is a good place to start when thinking about whether your ideas for a Shed will duplicate current community activity. You can also contact your local authority who may be able to give you information about local population demographics and areas of need that have been identified in local strategies. Often services and support for older people feature and there may also be local issues around mental health support, high unemployment levels or isolation.

Once you have decided that yes a Shed project could be a welcome addition in your community then there are other things that you should try to find out. Information collected at this early stage will inform how, where and what you set up, will help you to develop a project plan and work out budgets and funding requirements.

Holding a Consultation
A community consultation is a good way to raise awareness of your idea for a Shed and can help you to drum up interest, find people to help and maybe answer some of the burning questions you are bound to have. This is also a good opportunity to gather information that you could use should you need to apply for funding.

Before holding the event think about what you would like to achieve from the consultation and plan your session accordingly. You may be imparting information about your plans so far or asking for help - probably it’s a mixture of the two.

Consider
Do you need people to volunteer to be part of a committee or to take a lead role at Shed sessions?
If yes what skills and prior experience should they have?

Do you know where your Shed will run from?
If no are you looking for ideas?
If yes what do you need to do to the venue to get it ready to open?

Do you know what your Shed will do?
You may have some ideas about the kind of tools and activities that should be in the Shed but is this what your community wants? This is a good time to check what kind of activities people are interested in, what skills people already have and whether there is an interest in learning any particular new skills.
If you are looking to get funding for your Shed project then this is also a great opportunity to gather some information to support your funding bids. Many grant making bodies will ask how you know there is a need for your project and whether you have consulted with the community. Local demographic data and national studies can provide evidence of need for the concept of a Shed but a consultation shows real people have shown a real interest.

This adds weight to your funding application and increases your chances of success. Consider gathering information on the below:

- Age;
- Employment status;
- The skills and experiences they have;
- Activities they are interested in;
- Current levels of community involvement;
- How often they feel lonely or isolated;
- Confidence in social situations;
- Ratings of their physical and mental health;
- Frequency see GP or other health professional;

The answers to these questions will help you when setting up your Shed and when demonstrating to funders that their grant money if awarded will have a real impact on people’s lives.

Remember you can ask people to supply this information anonymously to encourage them to be honest in their responses.

As well as information gathering you also want to inspire people to get involved and support your Shed idea. A good first step is to see if a nearby Shed project can come and talk to your local community about their project. The UK Men’s Shed Association will be able to put you in contact with Sheds in your local area. Their website www.mensSheds.org.uk has a Shed finder page and you should be able to find someone willing to come and share their Sheds story. This is a good way for you to show the community what can be achieved and inspire local people.

**Setting up your Shed**

There is no right way or wrong way to set up a Shed but generally there are two approaches. There a Sheds that run as projects of larger charities such as Age UK, Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS) or Rural Community Councils or Sheds that are wholly volunteer led enterprises.

There are pros and cons to each approach for example as a project of a larger charity you will have access to their expertise which may include bid writing, volunteer management, training, supporting people etc. Conversely as a volunteer led group you won’t have overheads such as staff costs and contributions to the larger organisations costs. Setting up your own you may have lower overheads but you will also need to find insurance which may be more costly as a stand alone organisation rather than an extension of existing insurance.

If you choose to set up independently then the next question may be considering a structure for your group. If you require funding from an external organisation such as support from a local authority or a grant making body you will need a governing document. Depending on your organisations set up this will be called something different.

Not for profit organisations and charities will have a Constitution whereas companies will have a Memorandum and Articles of Association. Whatever the governing document is called it has the same function which is to outline the rules for the operation of your group, these may be legal responsibilities or locally agreed practices.
Choosing a structure
To set up a new organisation, you must decide what sort of legal structure it will have. The type of structure you choose affects how your charity will operate, such as:
- Who will run it and whether it will have a wider membership;
- Whether it can enter into contracts or employ staff in its own name;
- Whether the trustees will be personally liable for what the charity does.

When choosing a legal structure for your organisation there are a few things you will need to consider. As a potential committee member/trustee for a new group you should be aware of your responsibilities and liabilities under different structures and equally your fellow Shedders should also be aware.

For example as a registered charity your organisation will not be a legal entity in its own right. This means that individual trustees have personal responsibility for the charity - in the unlikely case of legal action being taken this will be taken against the individuals not the collective organisation.

If you are intending to take out an expensive or long term lease on a venue this should be in the name of the organisation as an entity rather than individual trustees so registered charity status on its own will not be suitable. Equally as you are intending to carry out some high risk activities involving power tools it is advisable to have insurance that is pointing towards an organisation rather than individuals. If you feel that a formal structure such as company status is not the way forward then another option to consider is purchasing trustee indemnity insurance as part of your insurance package.

As well as responsibility considerations you can also consider the benefits that come with particular structures. For instance some structures will enable you to rate relief on premises. Registered charities are entitled to 80% rate relief, with an additional discretionary 20% rate relief offered by some local authorities. This can have a significant impact on your outgoings. Charities also enjoy other tax benefits including the opportunity to Gift Aid financial contributions.

Types of Structure
There are 5 main types of structure:
- Not for profit group (small charities, unregistered);
- Registered charity;
- Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO);
- Community Interest Company (CICs);
- Registered company (limited by guarantee).

Read more about the structures on the table overleaf.

What about Social Enterprises?
Many people are aware of the idea of Social Enterprise and you may be surprised that it isn’t listed as a governance option in the above list. Social Enterprises take many forms and the term is a catch all for any community focussed organisation that makes some of it’s income through trade. These can be registered charities, CIOs, CICs or even private businesses.

In order to be sustainable most Sheds will carry out some income generation activities so will come into the heading a social enterprise regardless of the detail of their legal structure.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal entity</th>
<th>Charitable Status</th>
<th>Turnover restrictions</th>
<th>Reports to Charity</th>
<th>Reports to Companies</th>
<th>Eligible for Gift Aid</th>
<th>Rate Relief</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not for Profit group</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>£5,000</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A small community group with no registration or reporting requirements, also known as an unincorporated organisation. The constitution can be a simple set of guidelines for the governance of the group.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Charity</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>&gt;£5,000</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Registered charity is also an unincorporated organisation but with more structure and more legal reporting responsibilities. The constitution is much more detailed and the simplest option is to use the template constitution provided by the Charity Commission and adapt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) is a new form of legal entity designed for non-profit organisations in the United Kingdom. The main intended benefits of the new entity are that it has legal personality, the ability to conduct business in its own name, and limited liability so that its members and trustees will not have to contribute in the event of financial loss. These are already available to limited companies: charities can be formed as companies, but then they must be registered with both Companies House and the Charity Commission. In contrast, the CIO only needs to register with the Charity Commission.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Interest Company (CIC)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A community interest company (CIC) is a type of company designed for social enterprises that want to use their profits and assets for the public good. CICs are intended to be easy to set up, with all the flexibility and certainty of the company form, but with some special features to ensure they are working for the benefit of the community.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered company (limited by guarantee)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A private company limited by guarantee is an alternative type of corporation used primarily for non-profit organisations that require legal personality. A company limited by guarantee does not usually have a share capital or shareholders, but instead has members who act as guarantors. The guarantors give an undertaking to contribute a nominal amount (typically very small) in the event of the winding up of the company.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Charity with Charitable Status</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>&gt;£5,000</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A combination of a Registered Charity and Company limited by guarantee. Until the introduction of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation this was the common structure adopted by charities needing a legal identity.</td>
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</table>
**Governing Documents**
Once you have decided on a structure for your Shed you then need to look at the governing document. These will look different depending on the structure you choose.

An unincorporated group, including registered charities, will have a constitution, this is a set of rules for the operation of the group and sets out your agreed aims, the roles of the committee, rules for voting and holding meetings and your membership. Organisations with company status including charitable incorporated organisations will have Articles of Association.

Your local Council for Voluntary Service can provide support in putting together a governing document, in some cases these are legal documents so you may appreciate some guidance.

Additionally a good starting place is to work from a template. The Charity Commission has templates available for small charities. Registered charities and Charitable Incorporated Organisations on their website and you can find provide for Companies limited by guarantee and Community Interests Companies (CICs) on the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk).

Charity templates

Limited company template
[https://www.gov.uk/model-articles-of-association-for-limited-companies](https://www.gov.uk/model-articles-of-association-for-limited-companies)

CIC template

**Your Committee**
The process of setting up your Shed will also include forming a committee. The committee is the governing body of a project or voluntary organisation and is responsible for making decisions on their behalf. It can also be called a trustee board or a board of directors depending in your legal structure but fundamentally the role can incorporates the same responsibilities.

Duties of the committee or steering group include:
- Managing the organisations finances;
- Planning activities and giving direction;
- Managing staff or volunteers;
- Managing the responsibilities.

How a committee is structured will be set out in the organisation’s constitution, this will include information on the minimum and maximum number of committee members and how long they can serve.

If you are part of a larger organisation like a host charity this might take the form of a Steering group which would not have the legal responsibilities but would oversee the project management.

It is common for the number of committee members to be between 3 and 12 and there are usually 3 designated “officer” roles with specific duties within the committee:
- The Chair;
- The Secretary;
- The Treasurer.
The Chair
The Chair has the responsibility of ensuring that committee meetings are run effectively, that all parties are heard, decisions are made and carried through and that every agenda item is discussed as appropriate.

In addition this role is often the public 'figurehead' of the organisations and may be responsible for attending external meetings or public events.

The Chair is often also a signatory for the organisation’s finances and may also be involved with overseeing the budget, signing cheques, writing letter and recruiting staff/ volunteers.

The Secretary
The key role of the secretary is to provide administrative support to the management committee. This will include:

- Preparing agendas for meetings;
- Circulating papers;
- Booking rooms for meetings;
- Circulating information about the AGM;
- Keeping a list of the committee members and their contact details;
- Maintaining records of correspondence;
- Taking minutes;
- Following up on previous meeting’s actions.

The minutes are the legal record of the meeting and it is important that they accurately reflect the meeting’s content, any decisions taken and who actions are attributed to.

They are checked by the committee members and once approved are signed by the chair at the next meeting as a true record.

You may also include maintaining an up to date membership list of Shedders to the role of the secretary or could consider a separate membership secretary role.

The Treasurer
Committee members all have shared responsibility for ensuring that the organisation remains solvent, funds are used appropriately and the organisation reduces the risk of fraud. The treasurer facilitates these responsibilities by maintaining clear records of income expenditure and reports back to the full board regularly.

Duties of the treasurer will include:

- Maintaining proper systems for budgeting and financial control;
- Producing financial reports for the committee;
- Producing financial reports for the Charity Commission and Companies House in a timely manner if appropriate.

Other Roles
Committees can also choose to have other named roles for example some have Vice Chairs and many Sheds have a dedicated Health and Safety person to ensure policies, procedures and standards are maintained.
Decision making
It is very important right from the start you put in place motions that encourage decisions made by consensus. Your constitution should include information on how many people make a quorum. A quorum is the minimal number of officers and members of a committee or organisation, usually a majority, who must be present for a valid transaction of business.

It is important that people respect quorum decisions even if they do not agree with them, this is key to building a strong team.
Your Shed

Once you have made the decision to set up a Shed and thought about how it will be governed and managed you can begin to think about the more practical things that make up a Shed.

One of the first things will be finding a venue. Finding suitable premises will depend heavily on your local area. Suggestions include:

• Local authorities;
• National Rail providers;
• Health providers;
• Housing associations;
• Local community centres;
• Local industrial estates;
• Local heritage sites;
• Related businesses.

You can also look at Healthy Planet, https://beta.healthyplanet.org, a not for profit agency that identifies building owners and then looks for groups with charitable objectives who need the space.

An ideal venue will be large enough to have a good size workspace as well as space for socialising and storage. The aim is to find suitable cheap premises as this reduces the burden of on-going running costs once the initial set up costs are over. If you can’t find this ideal don’t be disheartened the most important thing about setting up a Shed is bringing people together, if the space you have only allows for cups of teas and hand tools then it’s a good place to start.

At the launch of the Men’s Shed Association, many Sheds shared how they obtained and funded their premises. This information is available on their website at http://www.mensSheds.org.uk/index.php/getting-started/84-subpages/121-linkedarticle#premise

You will probably not be lucky enough to find a disused workspace with fantastic flooring, fixed surfaces and up to date wiring so you might need to look at some building work. Depending on how much there is to do you may be able to get a team of future Shedders together to undertake some work but if it is structural or electrical it is important to ensure this is professionally.

Things to consider:

• How are you going to kit out the premises e.g. need for work benches;
• Change of use planning permissions;
• Multiple quotes for work – usually three;
• Finding funding for the work;
• Dust extraction;
• Placement of power points;
• Security arrangements.
**Getting Funding**

Most start up Sheds will need some funding to get going. Sheds can often generate income once established with sales of items made but this takes a while to get going so there should be some money in the pot to cover costs from the start.

**Budgets**

The first place to start is to look at setting a budget for the Shed. This can be used to inform funding bids and talk to potential sponsors. Be realistic when setting your budget, don’t be worried about it looking like it costs too much you need a clear idea of the real costs before getting started so that you don’t panic and have to cut back at a later date.

What you need to include in your budget will be different depending on your legal structure and your venue costs, the below list gives an idea of costs to consider:

- Rent;
- Business rates if applicable (ltd companies and CIC’s);
- Planning permission fees;
- Utilities – heating, electricity and water;
- Insurance;
- Supervision costs – payroll;
- Decoration and workshop DIY;
- Equipment purchase and maintenance;
- Material and tool purchase;
- Sundry items – refreshments, cleaning materials office consumables;
- Promotional materials;
- Organisation overheads (if you are hosted by a larger charity);
- Training;
- Health and Safety Protective Equipment;
- Volunteer/Committee Expenses.

Many of these will be unknown and you will have to make some informed guesstimates. Funders will not query these if you are able to explain what informed your figures. You may be able to work out what the average commercial rent is in your area, look up the average price of tools online. You can also speak to other Sheds about their costs to help inform your budget. The UK Men’s Shed association will be able to put you in contact with people who can help.

Putting together a budget may also help you to identify where volunteers can help out with tasks. For example you may need to carry out some decoration and basic DIY in your Shed space and instead of paying a professional a volunteer team can do this for the cost of the materials. In cases like this you can still put a financial value on the activity and this can be used as an example of match funding.
Guideline costs as supplied by UK Men’s Shed Association October 2013

Major items

Rental: Typical commercial rent £45 per square metre per annum. Medium size Shed, £200 square metres = £9,000 per annum. However a vacant property rented to a charity may be half that rate plus will save on business rates. Rental can be free, cover utilities only.

Utilities: A domestic house costs £1500 per annum. You will need to consider the relative size of the building and the number of hours in operation.

Insurance: guideline = £15 per person. Typically £400 - £750 per Shed. This includes public liability, building and contents insurance

Supervision/staffing: basic cost £25,000 per annum. However self or volunteer supervision is an alternative

Equipment: Purchase out of capital grants. Annual maintenance and repairs approximately £2000 per annum.

Summary annual costs:

Assumptions made: No business rates, no supervision/staffing costs, Medium sized Shed
Rental: £9,000
Overheads, utilities, equipment maintenance, sundries: £3,500
Insurance: £ 500

Total: £13,000

Section 3: Shed Building
Identifying Need
Once you have a committee, an idea of premises and an outline budget the next step for getting funding is to prove to a funder that there is a need in your community for a Men’s Shed. This will involve:
- Providing research and statistics on your local area,
- Information on the benefits of a Shed to men’s health,
- Feedback from local people

Local area information
Local area statistics are available from [www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk). Your local authority will also have strategies and assessments that are helpful. For example you will usually be able to find a Local Strategic Plan, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) or local health and well being plans. These are usually available from your local district/ borough Council and local area Clinical Commissioning Group or you can speak to your local CVS who will be able to help. They can often also be found on websites so Google will also be your friend here.

You might find that within your area you have:
- Higher than average populations of older people;
- High numbers of people unemployed or low skilled;
- High prevalence of people claiming disability benefits;
- Issues around access to services/support.

When you read the strategy look for evidence that support your thoughts about who might benefit from a Shed. With any luck the strategies will back up what you already know to be true as a member of the community and will add weight to your claims.

Health Benefits
There is a range of empirical evidence that demonstrates how Sheds can be of benefit to men’s health and explaining this to a potential funder will encourage them to support your project.

Examples of evidence are:

**Peer Support**
When it comes to discussing worries and concerns, health issues and other matters men and women are quite different. Where women will open up to others and speak to professionals men can be more closed. By providing an environment where practical activities and hobbies can be undertaken and shared it builds a strong peer community which encourages men to open up.

Studies have shown how beneficial peer networks can be to all parties involved. The Mental Health Foundation in 2012 published the “Need2Know Peer Support” paper which highlights that peer support relationships have greater levels of empathy and respect then other support relationships and improve confidence, self-worth and wellbeing in all parties.

**Reduced isolation/loneliness**
‘The Lonely Society?’ (Mental Health Foundation, 2010) outlines how chronic loneliness can have both physiological and mental health repercussions. It cites negative effects on stress hormones, immune function, cardiovascular function as well as increases in anxiety levels, risk of suicide and risk of substance misuse. Similarly, it outlines how isolation can have a detrimental impact on individuals recovering from mental health issues, preventing them from accessing support services and social networks. This finding is replicated in a study on the effect of isolation on older people in rural communities carried out by the Commission for Rural Communities in
2012 which states that Social isolation has been found to exert an independent influence on risk for mortality comparable with well-established risk factors such as smoking.

Encouraging healthy lifestyles
The Shed environment has been proven to be a conduit to changes in health related behaviour amongst men. It has been so successful that in 2008 the concept was highlighted in the Irish Men’s Health policy which states “‘Men’s Sheds’ are another good example of community-based health promotion targeting men. Since the mid-1990s, 192 of these organisation have been established, engaging mostly with older men who are no longer working in paid employment and who have proved difficult to engage in conventional health, education and training initiatives. Through the provision of ‘mateship’ and a sense of belonging through positive and therapeutic informal activities, ‘Men’s Sheds’ achieve outcomes of positive health, happiness and well-being for those men who participate, as well as for their partners, families and communities.

Other health
A paper written for the UK Mens Shed Association by Dr. Snorri Bjorn Rafnsson, UCL Department of Epidemiology and Public Health entitled “Social engagement, health and wellbeing of older men” identifies a surprising number of ways that community involvement has health benefits for men ranging from reduced impact of a disability, improved dental health, reduced use of medications, lower levels of depression, reduced emotional distress and delayed onset of dementias. In this paper Dr Rafnsson asserts that “the scientific evidence shows that the likelihood of dying associated with having poor social relationships may be comparable to that of having a chronic disease such as diabetes. On the other hand, better social participation is related to additional years lived in good health and fewer years spent in poor health.”

Health inequalities
When it comes to health there are a number of inequalities that demonstrate that men need focussed support and need to be treated differently to women. The Men’s Health Forum provides a wealth of information about the how men’s health is an important issue. For example one in five men will die before the age of 65. Men are also at higher risk of cardiovascular issues or cancer and more at risk of these being fatal, men are more likely to be smokers or to drink heavily, they are more at risk of diabetes and less likely to know about it. More worryingly the biggest killer of men under the age of 35 is suicide with four out of five suicides being by men, there has also been a sharp increase in suicide numbers in the 35-65 age range.

Men are also less likely to access support from their GP or other community support services such as smoking cessation, weight management or pharmacies.

These inequalities demonstrate clearly that men need support that is specific to them and the Shed environment can provide it.

Where to find research
There are many places you can look online to find information that support Men’s Sheds. Below is a sample of the many online resources:

Australian Men's Shed Association website [www.mensShed.org/research/.aspx](http://www.mensShed.org/research/.aspx) (mostly Australian)
Campaign to End Loneliness [www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/loneliness-research](http://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/loneliness-research)
Mental Health Foundation [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/help-information/mental-health-a-z](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/help-information/mental-health-a-z)
Men’s Health Forum [www.menshealthforum.org.uk](http://www.menshealthforum.org.uk)
Aligning with priorities
When you are applying to a funder be sure to align your request for funding with their priorities. For example some funders will only be interested in providing capital funding. This means they will pay for tools and workbenches but won’t be interested in insurance costs or the cost of tea and biscuits! Others might work the other way round so it is important to be clear from the outset so you don’t waste time writing a bid to someone who will reject your application straight away.

As well as the difference between capital costs and revenue (ongoing costs) funders will probably specify particular interests such as young people, mental health, access to training, health improvements etc. Be sure to familiarise yourself with these so that you ensure that your application to them highlights how you meet their priorities.

You might wish to apply to one funder for all your project costs or it might be appropriate to split the capital and revenue elements. You can apply to more than one funder at a time, just be sure to withdraw an application if you are successful elsewhere.

Remember funders will ask for evaluation and monitoring reports to show that you have achieved what you planned so don’t be tempted to promise the earth or distort your project to match their priorities. Be clear about what you intend to achieve and the difference you want to make.

Monitoring impact
One of the key things that funders will look for is what difference their funding will make to people’s lives. Many will want to see a lasting change in people’s circumstances and improvements in health, wellbeing, quality of life or skills.

Monitoring information can be put into two categories outputs and outcomes.

Outputs
Outputs are information about what you do:
- How many members you have;
- Demographic data about your Shedders e.g. How old they are, what their employment status is etc;
- How many sessions have been held;
- How many times individuals have attended.

Outcomes
Outcomes are information about what difference you make:
- People feel less isolated;
- People feel more involved in their community;
- People feel more confident.

While you are writing your application you might want to think about how you will evidence you have achieved your stated outcomes and benefits. Outputs are easy to measure as they are largely quantitative data however outcomes are not as clear cut and it is useful to think about this early.

One popular way of demonstrating change in people is to capture baseline information when you begin to provide support i.e. when they join the Shed and this can be used as a comparison after a specified time period has passed. Baseline data could include subjective measures of how confident they feel, how involved with the community they are, how often they feel isolated or lonely and how well they feel both physically and mentally.
Where to find funding
There are lots of grant making organisations out there including charitable trusts, statutory bodies and private companies. Knowing where to start can be difficult and your local CVS will be able to help you to identify those funders who are most likely to support your project. You can also look online at Funding Central www.fundingcentral.org.uk

Some key funders to look at are:

Awards for All: Depending on the size of your project Awards for All is a good option for Sheds. It is the small grant fund from the Big Lottery Fund making grants of between £300- £10,000. They will not be suitable if you have a big building project on your hands or if you need to employ staff but for all other Shed costs such as tools they are approachable. The priorities of Awards for All are:
- People have better chances in life – with better access to training and development to improve life skills.
- Stronger communities – with more active citizens working together to tackle issues within the community.
- Improved rural and urban environments – which communities are able to better access and enjoy.
- Healthier and more active people and communities.

Reaching Communities: This is the large grant scheme from the Big Lottery Fund and funds applications over £10,000, they will include larger building projects and staff costs. The priorities for Reaching Communities are the same as Awards for All.

Find out more about both of these funds online at www.biglotteryfund.org.uk

The Tudor Trust: The Tudor Trust makes grants, and provides other types of support, to voluntary and community groups working in any part of the UK. They particularly want to help smaller, community-led organisations which work directly with people who are at the margins of society: organisations which support positive changes in people’s lives and in their communities. There are no minimum or maximum grants and they can be multi year.

Find out more online at www.tudortrust.org.uk

Community Foundation: There are 48 accredited community foundations in the UK, they make grants in their local area often facilitating giving from local people and companies into the community. Grants can range from small focussed funds in specific localities to more general larger grants. Comic Relief for example uses Community Foundations to distribute some funds. Find your local foundation at http://ukcommunityfoundations.org/community_foundations/map/
Writing a Funding Bid - Top Tips

1. Always read the criteria and ensure you are eligible to apply. Use the “What we fund” info as a checklist to ensure your application will be considered and double check your project details against the exclusion list.

2. Check your planned activities against the funder’s priorities and ensure that your application demonstrates how your project will meet these priorities.

3. Write your bid to a stranger – do not assume that the individuals reading your bid will have any background knowledge about the services you provide, your geographic area or service-user group.

4. Make sure your answers convey the key elements of your project clearly and are focused on the question. If you have a lot of background information to include then consider including it as a separate appendix or supporting document.

5. When explaining your project’s objectives, include both outcomes and outputs. An example of an output is “we will hold 6 training sessions explaining the benefit system with 20 attendees”, whereas an outcome might be “attendees will have improved quality of life through increased awareness of and ability to access benefits available to them”

6. Provide facts and figures relating to your project. Funders will want to see a demonstrated need for the project, you may need to run a survey of members, hold focus groups or show evidence of consultation with other service providers.

7. Don’t assume that you shouldn’t repeat yourself if you have answered the question in another part of a form. Treat each question individually and ensure you have completed them as well as possible – assessors may look at a particular question in isolation from the rest of the form.

8. Consider the future of your project. If you are applying for general running costs how will the project continue after the funding ends? Can it become sustainable? How will its successes be monitored?

9. Ensure your budget is accurate, includes quotes as necessary and is broken down into capital and revenue costs. If there is a reason why an item on the budget is particularly high or low consider including an explanation of how the figure was calculated.

10. Check what supporting evidence is required and ensure that it accompanies your application. This may include getting information from your bank, developing policies and procedures or getting references so ensure you look at this when you first sit down to write the application as they may take time to put together.

11. Do not leave funding applications to the last minute. Find out when the deadlines are and plan you time so the application is not rushed. Remember you can always contact your local CVS for advice when filling out the application or ask them to look over an application once completed.
**Income generation**

**Charging for membership**  
You probably don’t want to introduce large membership fees for your Shed as high costs can be off putting and puts more pressure on you to deliver high quality service rather than an informal session. However a nominal fee for membership and/or Shed sessions attended adds value to the Shed and allows you to cover some ongoing costs such as refreshments.

**Fundraising**  
Getting money from other sources of income might need the involvement of a few people and raise less money at one time. However the funds will be unrestricted and can strengthen your organisation both financially and in regard to your awareness in the community. It can also involve and motivate volunteers.

There are many alternative ways that you can raise funds for your organisation, for example:

- Events – such as jumble sales, bake sales, raffles, quiz nights, dances or sponsored walks;
- Collections;
- Profile on online platforms such as Just Giving;
- Business sponsorship/support.

**Selling products**  
One of the great things about Sheds is that goods can be made there that can be sold to support the Sheds ongoing costs. Simple things like bird boxes and planters will always sell and can also be used to help familiarise people with tools and processes to help with up skilling. You can sell at community events such as carnivals and village shows, from your Shed premises or at car boot sales.

**How to price items**  
There is no set method of how to price items, one good way it to look at similar items in the marketplace and set your prices to be competitive with them. You can also calculate the production cost of the goods, including the cost of any materials and a contribution to the time spent by shedders in making the product.

How you price may be guided by how much income you wish to generate from sales. If you have high overheads you might want to make more money through this route but be careful not to put pressure on shedders to deliver products to a deadline.
Resource Raising
In tandem with fundraising Shed projects can benefit from resource raising. Resource raising is generating donated resources to grow an organisation's capacity alongside the more traditional donations of money and time.

Where funding is becoming increasingly competitive developing a strategy that includes resource raising for things such as goods and services, facilities, knowledge and skills or influence could be of benefit.

We are living in austere times so even though people may want to give generously, it may not be a viable option. Offering would-be donors a way of helping without having to part with their money, is a perfect way of simply getting more donations.

Take some time to decide what kind of resources you need. Once this is agreed upon think about who might be able to offer those resources as an in-kind donation or at a reduced rate.

Many businesses believe that offering skills and other non-cash resources would make much more of an impact on their charity partner's mission delivery than purely cash-based relationships. Build on this and create a dialogue with potential supporters to ensure you meet their objectives too. Whilst they may have altruistic aims, it always helps if they get an added benefit too.

In the case of Sheds you may be able to negotiate a reduced rate on tools from a local supplier or you can take advantage of the UK Men’s Shed Associations partnership with Triton Tools who offer a discount to member Sheds. Other options are wood off cuts from timber yards or training and demonstrations from local trades people.

Read more about resource raising
http://knowhownonprofit.org/how-to/resource-raising-why-bother
Section 4: Running your Shed
Laying the groundwork
Before you open the doors to your Shed and invite people in there are a few things you need to make sure are in place. It is important to ensure that you have a safe and friendly environment for people and that the way in which this is achieved is communicated to people.

Insurance
One of the key things you will need to get sorted before any Shedder picks up a tool is your insurance. You will need to have public liability insurance to cover any injuries that might occur and contents insurance to cover your tools and materials. You may also need buildings insurance depending on the details or your lease or if you own the premises you will be operating out of or trustee indemnity insurance if you are not a incorporated organisation

Public liability
Public liability insurance is arguably the most important of your insurances may be the most complicated and expensive part of the on-going costs. It is likely to cost upwards of £500 per year because you will be undertaking high risk activity. An insurance company will ask you to provide a range of information to show that you have taken appropriate steps to guard against risk. This can include:

- A list of the tools you will have in the Shed including the specifications of the tools
- Copies of risk assessments for all of the tools
- Evidence of PAT testing where appropriate
- Statement of experience and training for everyone who is in charge of maintaining health and safety
- Information on storage of substances and waste management
- Health and Safety Statement, workshop rules and code of conduct
- Induction policy and forms
- Information on where/how you intend to sell items made at the Shed.

Ensuring that the insurance company is happy to provide cover and is fully informed of all planned activities is extremely important and takes time to get right. It is advisable to begin talking to your insurance company in plenty of time, don’t assume you’re going to get insurance straight away, they will invariably have questions and you don’t want to delay a launch or opening because they you are still waiting on their final decision.

Buildings and contents
As with any other building containing valuable equipment you will need contents insurance cover. Building insurance may be provided by your landlord but it is a good idea to check exactly what they will be responsible for and what they expect you to cover. For example some may be happy to cover the fabric of the building but will not cover fixtures and fittings where some will. Your insurance company will probably specify a minimum security standard they expect to be in place and it will be your responsibility to ensure this is maintained otherwise you risk voiding the policy.

Trustees Indemnity Insurance
Trustee Indemnity insurance protects the trustees on the committee from being personally liable for anything that happens such as someone having a serious accident with a power tool. The insurance is low cost but worth having if you are an unincorporated organisation with no legal identity.
Sept 2013: The Old Mortuary Building in Maldon Cemetery was identified as a building within Maldon District Councils portfolio that had potential to be a Shed.

After a couple of site visits and the promise of a peppercorn rent the decision was made to go ahead!

Oct 2013: The first step was to see whether the building was structurally sound.

To do this we organised a volunteer work party managed by The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) to begin removing the ivy from the building.

Nov 2013: The removal of the ivy identified that there were no major structural issues with the property and we were able to go ahead with planning for the renovations.

Applications were put in and over £21,000 was raised from the Essex Environment Trust and Community Initiatives Fund. By March 2014 we were ready to go!

Mar 2014: Now the building work was on track Maldon and District CVS held the first Community open day, we invited Matt from All Hallows Shed in Ipswich to talk about his project and begin recruiting our team of Shedders!
Apr 2014: The building work gets underway. With huge support from Maldon District Council who project managed the whole job.

There is a long list of things that need doing, the old Mortuary is in effect gutted and given a full refurbishment.

July 2014: A blank canvas is ready for the Shedders to use. In the background we have been working to write our Codes of Conduct, Health and Safety processes and organise insurance.

August 2014: with funding from Who Will Care? and Magnox a work party of Shedders get underway with painting, decorating and kitting out the Maldon Shed. Culminating in the launch with Maldon Town Mayor in September 2014!

From September 2014: The Maldon Shed is open, supported by Maldon and District CVS and run by a team of volunteers the project provides a welcoming community space for men.

Men of all ages are welcome, the youngest member is 19 and the oldest 84. People come for many reasons and there is a wide variety of shedders from all backgrounds sharing their skills and time.

Visit the project website on www.maldonshed.btck.co.uk
**Writing policies**

There are a few different policies that you should have in place before opening your Shed doors. A solid foundation of policies and procedures means that staff, volunteers and clients know what is expected of them and what they can expect in return.

Policies and procedures can assist in:

- Providing a safe and comfortable environment for vulnerable people,
- Providing an outlet for grievances,
- Outlining training requirements and provision,
- Setting out safe working practice to minimise risk,
- Ensuring the safety of children,
- Explaining recruitment procedures, and requirements,
- Indicating how to raise concerns and explaining how they will be dealt with,
- Ensuring accidents are dealt with safely and documented correctly,
- Ensuring equal treatment of all those involved in the organisation, or accessing its services,
- Safeguarding individuals’ data protection rights,

In addition many funders look for policies before awarding a grant.

Good policies help protect the individual and organisation from misunderstandings, which can lead to time consuming and sometimes distressing disagreements or even legal action.

**What polices do we need?**

Depending on the size and activities of your organisation you will need different policies. Some policies such as Equal opportunities are good practice in every organisation whereas some are specifically related to your operation such as safeguarding or manual handling.

Additionally if you employ staff you must have a disciplinary and grievance policy and if you employ five or more staff there is a legal requirement for a written health and safety policy.

**Equal opportunities**

It is good practice to have an Equal Opportunities Policy and this is one of the key policies that a lot of funders will look to see before awarding funding.

The details that are contained within an Equal Opportunity Policy will vary depending on the size of the organisation. Some smaller organisations may wish to have a simple equal opportunities statement whereas larger organisations and those that employ staff should go into more detail. Organisations must provide an environment free from discrimination of any kind for its employees and it is good practice to extend this to all those with access to their service for example volunteers and service users. Legal action can be taken against employers who demonstrate unfair discriminatory practices.

**Equal Opportunities Statements**

An Equal Opportunities Policy should open with a statement of intent this is usually a paragraph that acknowledges that discrimination exists and confirms your group’s commitment to providing equal access to your service regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability or religion. For small groups your policy can stop and start with this statement.
For example: *Organisation name* recognises that discrimination can exist in society and strives to ensure that all individuals involved with or using the services of XXXX are treated with dignity and respect. *Organisation name* is committed to providing a welcoming atmosphere to all individuals regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age.

*Organisation name* is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity to all users, volunteers and staff.

**But Men’s Sheds are just for Men**

One difficulty with an Equal opportunities statement or policy for Men’s Sheds is that the vast majority of Sheds will seek to discriminate on the basis of gender and restrict membership or beneficiaries to men only. How do you write an equal opportunities statement on that basis?

A bit of background to this is the Equality Act 2010, this passed into law on 28th April 2010, it consolidated previous anti-discrimination legislation into a single Act and introduced new rights, responsibilities and changes.

One of the key aspects affecting the voluntary sector is the “charitable instrument exemption”. Under previous legislation charities were able to restrict their beneficiaries in line with their governing document. This exemption has now been removed and organisations will have to prove a “legitimate aim”

Charities can “discriminate” against people if their services are targeted towards a particular demographic who share a protected characteristic, in the case of Men in Sheds this will be gender. This is only permissible if your governing document outlines this restriction and the your aim is to tackle a particular disadvantage faced by people who share a protected characteristic or the charity is not tackling a particular disadvantage but is seeking to achieve some other legitimate aim in a fair, balanced and reasonable way.

**Putting this into the example of a Shed project**

When writing your governing document you are allowed to expressly name men as your beneficiary group as gender is a protected characteristic. Shed projects are usually set up because there is recognition that men interact differently to women and the resulting outcomes are often that they are at higher risk of being socially isolated. This being the case Men in Shed projects are tackling disadvantage linked to a protected characteristic and can apply the charitable exemption as explained below:

A charity is set up to deliver a Shed project to reduce social isolation in men only. The charity can only follow the restriction to people of a particular gender if the risk of isolation is particularly high in men. To meet the disadvantage element of the charities’ exception, the trustees must be satisfied that the risk is higher for the group it is working with, namely men (although you could restrict to older men if preferred) than for the general population.

Full details of how the charity exemption can be applied can be found on the charity commission website: [www.charity-commission.gov.uk/library/equality_act_guidance.pdf](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/library/equality_act_guidance.pdf)

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1: protected characteristics covered by the Act are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.
Having identified a legitimate charitable exemption to limit your activities to a particular gender your Equal opportunities statement/policy must focus on other areas of ensuring equal access. For example how will you ensure people are not disadvantaged in accessing your Shed due to mobility issues, age, language etc.

**Safeguarding**
As a Shed you may feel that some of your Shedders may be classed as vulnerable adults in which case you will need a policy and procedures to outline any support that you offer.

Don’t be worried that by opening a Shed you will all need to receive training on supporting people with additional needs and be equipped and ready to provide professional support and caring duties. Overall many Sheds take the stance that they do not provide care and therefore if someone is in need of a support worker or carer in their day to day lives then that person should accompany them to Shed sessions. This can be the beginning of your policy; however it does not remove all your duty of care.

**Duty of care** requires that you do everything ‘reasonable’ within your power to protect others from significant harm. This harm can come in different form such as:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Neglect
- Discrimination
- Institutional abuse

A safeguarding policy should outline your commitment to your duty of care and the measures that you will take to ensure this commitment is met. The first stage of this is to include the need for additional support to be provided by the individual’s carer/support worker however you also need to give some guidance about what you should do if there is a suspicion of abuse, neglect or harm.

This will probably be a reporting process where concerns are highlighted to the Chair or a committee members and acted on as appropriate, this could be taking advice from somewhere like Action on Elder Abuse [http://www.elderabuse.org.uk](http://www.elderabuse.org.uk), reporting to social services or the police or doing a third party referral to the Samaritans.
Managing Risk
When you walk into a typical community Shed you will see a number of opportunities to do yourself considerable harm such as band saws, circular saws, grinding wheels, electricity etc. it is the responsibility of those of you running the Shed that the chances of this harm actually taking place is reduced as much as possible.

Health and Safety
The first place to start is a commitment to Health and Safety, this is done through a Health and Safety policy, this policy is generally an overarching document that will reference other procedures.

See Appendix 1 for a sample statement. There is also a wealth of information available from the Health and Safety executive at www.hse.gov.uk

Sitting below the overarching statement will be a series of lower level procedures that drill down more detail. This will include Codes of Conduct, Risk Assessments, Maintenance procedures, COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) assessments and use of equipment.

Equipping the Shed
Part of your Health and Safety appraisal and Risk Assessments will be the use of safety equipment and it is your responsibility to ensure that these are easily to hand for people to use and that they are maintained.

Fire Extinguishers
Depending on the size of the Shed you will need at least one of these, probably more and you may also need a fire blanket. Fire extinguishers are colour coded and used for different fire types, ensure you have the correct type of extinguisher or you could inadvertently make a bad situation worse.

Codes of Fire Extinguishers
Red: Water extinguisher, used on fires involving organic materials such as wood and paper, not safe on electrical fires or burning fat/oil

Blue: Powder extinguisher, used on fires involving organic materials such as wood and paper and can also be used on grease and oil based fires although not safe on chip or fat pan fires. Safe on live electrical equipment, although does not penetrate the spaces in equipment easily and the fire may re-ignite. This type of extinguisher does not cool the fire very well and care should be taken that the fire does not flare up again. There is danger of inhalation if powder extinguishers are used within buildings.

Cream: Foam extinguisher, used on fires involving solids and burning liquids, such as paint and petrol but not suitable for chip or fat pan fires. Safe on fires caused by electricity if tested to 35kV (dielectric test) and a 1m safety distance is adhered to.

Black: Carbon Dioxide (CO2) extinguisher, used on live electrical equipment, Fumes from CO2 extinguishers can asphyxiate if used in confined spaces: ventilate the area as soon as the fire has been controlled.Only use CO2 extinguishers with frost-free horns, as the hand holding the horn can otherwise be frozen to the horn, as the gas is getting very cold during the discharge.

Fire Blanket: Fire blankets are made of fire resistant materials. They are particularly useful for smothering flammable liquid fires or for wrapping round a person whose clothing is on fire.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
Personal Protective Equipment is equipment designed to protect an individual from harm whilst carrying out activities. In a workshop environment such as a Shed this could include:

- Protective gloves: can protect against chemicals and other skin irritants. Avoid gloves when operating machines such as bench drills where the gloves could get caught
- Protective goggles: can protect against dust and splinters and chemical splashes.
- Protective ear covers: can protect against extreme noise
- Protective masks: can protect against inhalation of dust, fumes and airborne particles.

PPE should be stored correctly and regularly checked and replaced as needed. Hygiene and contamination should be considered for items such as goggles that may be used by more than one person and antibacterial wipes are a good way of keeping equipment clean.

Other items
As well as fire safety equipment and PPE there are other things that you should have in the Shed as part of your health and safety procedures and these could include:

- Accident book: used to record any accidents that occur, to adhere to the Data Protection Act you will also need a secure place to store any completed forms that will have peoples personal contact details on.
- Signage (such as no smoking, wet floor, fire exit)
- First aid kit
- Smoke alarms

Regular checks
Having health and safety plans and procedures are only worthwhile if they are maintained and reviewed. It is important that regular checks are carried out so that problems can be spotted early and accidents prevented. Often this can be a monthly walk round carrying out a visual check of equipment, this should be recorded and signed off so that you can demonstrate your commitment or keeping things safe if problems arise.

Things to check include:
- Visual check of plugs and leads
- Smoke alarms in working order – checking batteries and dust build up
- Visual check of power tools – checking for dust build up, lubricating moving parts and checking safety features
- Checking dust extraction for build up of dust and debris

As part of your regular checks there will be annual checks needed on electrical equipment. PAT tests (portable appliance testing) check for electrical defects that cannot be detected through visual examination and are an important part of maintaining safety in the workshop.

Fire extinguishers should also be serviced on an annual basis.

See Appendix 2: for an example of a maintenance schedule.
Risk Assessments
Risk assessments are processes that enable you to identify potential risks, their likelihood and severity and steps that should be taken to minimise those risks.

Risk assessments should be carried out on all activities and this is vital to ensuring your Shed remains a safe environment, this may include carrying out assessments on the use of a particular tools or machinery or a particular activity. You may also need to carry out a risk assessment on a particular individual e.g. someone with Asthma, a back injury, on a medication that may cause drowsiness or recovering from Stroke. You may assess that they need one to one support on machinery, need to always use a protective mask or that some tools are not safe for them to use in any circumstances.

It is also looking into what risks associated with the building you are using are your responsibility and what you need to be reporting to you landlord. For example: if there is poor lighting in the car park this is likely to be something the landlord needs to be aware of and address, however if you place a cable across a floor it is up to you to minimise the risk of someone tripping.

5 Steps
There are 5 simple steps to carrying out a risk assessment.

Step 1: Identify the Hazard/Risk
Take a look at the activities that will be carried out.
- What/who could potentially cause harm?
- Is there a history of incidents/accidents to consider?
- Check manufacturers guidance on equipment or chemical products

Step 2: Decide who might be harmed and how
For each identified hazard think about who may be harmed:
- Is there a particular risk to a specific group of people such as older people, those with disabilities, children?
- What might happen to them?

Step 3: Evaluate the risk and decide on the precaution
What can you do
- Can you get rid of the hazard altogether?
- If not, how can you control the risks so that harm is unlikely?

Step 4: Record your findings and implement them
Write down your findings and ensure that precautionary measures are taken where possible. Ensure others are aware of their responsibilities

Step 5: Review and update
Risk assessments should be consistently reviewed to ensure that they are still relevant. This should be at least annually but also should be part of event planning or reviewed in the case of an incident occurring.
Risk Matrices
One way to assess risk is to use a Risk Matrix. A Risk Matrix defines various levels of risk such as how likely a risk is and how severe the outcome will be. This can help to identify where extra precautions must be taken or if an activity should be avoided entirely.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likelihood</th>
<th>Very Likely</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Unlikely</th>
<th>Very Unlikely</th>
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<td>Extreme</td>
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</tbody>
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Where a risk is assessed as High or Extreme careful consideration should be taken as to whether you can continue with this activity, certainly safety precautions must be put in place to lower the risk.

If an activity is Medium further safeguards should be investigated and put in place if possible but it is usually considered OK to continue with these activities in the short term.

Activities that score low are generally considered to be an acceptable level of risk but must still be reviewed regularly.

Within a Shed environment you will need to consider Risk Assessments for the following:
(please note this is not an exhaustive list and you should look at your individual Shed set up to ensure you have considered all potential risks)

- Individual power tools
- General power tools usage
- Use of hand tools
- Manual Handling
- Fire risk
- Noise risk
- Slips, trips and falls
- Wood dust
- Electricity
- Hazardous substances
- Working alone
- People with health conditions

See Appendix 3 for a sample risk assessment.
Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)
As well as considering the affect of tools and environmental factors on risk you will also need to consider how particular liquids and substances may affect people. For example some are flammable and need to be stored in a metal container, others might be toxic if inhaled or injected or could be an irritant to skin. Where any of these are the case guidance needs to be given in regards safe handling, storage or minimising exposure, this is known as a COSHH assessment.

In a lot of cases manufacturers of products will provide datasheets for their product that will outline the hazards, safeguards and protections you need.

Remember COSHH assessments will be needed for things like cleaning products as well as paints, stains and oils. You should also carry out a COSHH assessment on things like wood dust.

The Health and Safety Executive is again a great starting point to find out more and they have a section dedicated to COSHH [www.hse.gov.uk/coshh](http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh)

Letting people know
The final part of the process of developing health and safety protocols and risk assessing activities is to communicate your findings to people who are affected. A lovely set of policies and guidance will do you no good if they are neatly stored on a bookshelf and collecting dust, they need to be working documents.

There are a number of ways you can ensure that people are made aware of what they need to do to ensure health and safety is upheld.

Induction
Every Shedder should go through an induction process; there will be a broad spectrum of abilities within your Shed, with many people not being experienced machinists. An assessment programme should be put into place in which people are introduced to the machines on a one-to-one basis with an experienced supervisor and then assessed on their ability to use the tool. Some people will be assessed as competent straight away others will need support to reach competency.

You will need an induction process for each member that includes health and safety issues. This should contain the key points of the health and safety explaining the overall context and rules. Shedders should be asked to sign the an induction form stating that they have received and understood information given. The purpose of that is if there is an injury at a later date, then it can be proved that the individual had received information to stay safe. It provides an auditing trail for anyone to see and protects the organisation from litigation.

See Appendix 4 for an example a induction agreement and 5 for an example of an induction checklist.

Code of conduct
As part of signing up to become a member or the Shed, individuals should also sign up to adhere to a Code of Conduct which can be explained as part of the induction and Shedders should all have a copy as well as it being displayed in the Shed. What is included in the Code of Conduct gives a good baseline for upholding health and safety and can also be a way of outlining behaviours that are not acceptable at the Shed. This helps to maintain a welcoming and supportive environment.
**Signage**
You can consider having key points or risk assessment on display near tools, for example what PPE needs to be used with each machine and reminders about tying back loose hair and clothing.

An example of this is Appendix 6.

Signage should also include “do not use” signs if an issue has been identified with a particular tool, wet floor signs, fire exits and safety information, no smoking signs etc.

**Training**
Given that most of the Shedders will probably not be experienced machinists, they will require training to use the power tools. This can be provided by the Supervisors who have been selected on the basis of their ability to use the tools safely. If not they will also require training before they can pass on their knowledge to others.

You should consider what training your Shed could benefit from, you may wish to put all those responsible for maintaining health and safety through some first aid and health and safety training but this could also be extended to Shedders? You could also consider training on managing difficult situations or communication skills.

You can also make sure that information leaflets are to hand within the Shed building the Health and Safety executive has a wide range of publications available to download or order. Visit [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) to find out more.

**First Aid**
Accidents may well happen within your Shed and it will be important that people are on hand with knowledge of First Aid and a well stocked First Aid kit is both present and easy to access.

A basic first aid kit may contain:
- plasters in a variety of different sizes and shapes.
- small, medium and large sterile gauze dressings.
- sterile eye dressings.
- triangular bandages.
- crêpe rolled bandages.
- safety pins.
- disposable sterile gloves.
- tweezers.
- scissors.
- alcohol-free cleansing wipes.
- sticky tape.

It is not advisable to have medications and creams in a kit as you may not know if people have allergies. Individuals wishing to take painkillers or anti-histamines etc should bring their own to the Shed.

Remember you should always record accidents no matter how small in an accident book. This will help you to firstly record the details of an incident while it is fresh in your mind and also to review if there are common accidents occurring and you can review your practices in accordance,
Section 6: Filling your Shed
Letting People know
Once you have a building, some funding, your insurances and structure sorted out, tools and equipment and all your policies on place you need the last and most important ingredient to a successful Shed project and that’s people. You will now need to begin promotion.

Press and the media
Involving the local media as early as possible is vital in publicising the project and finding interested parties in attending the Shed and or becoming a committee member. You should find out who within your local papers is the correspondent for your area and send things directly to them.
Remember you will need to have a contact point for all press releases and public enquiries, if people do not want to give out personal information consider setting up an email account specifically for the Shed or purchasing a pay as you go mobile phone to take calls.

Branding
Simple branding can be quite effective and can be more memorable than words alone. You could choose to use a particular font or colours (works for Coca-cola) use this consistently and people are more likely to remember you.

Marketing materials
You will need to have some materials printed with information about your project to give out at events or to leave at community venues etc. If you don’t have someone within your Shed team who has the skills to put this together focus on putting together the words you want to use in the first instance. You can then see if a local printing company can help you with some low cost or free design work or you might be able to find a volunteer who has the skills you need. Contact your local Volunteer Centre to see how they can help.

Website
In order to reach as many people as possible it is important to have a website.
BT community connections do websites for free for community groups that are simple to set up. They don’t come with an email address but there is a contact form and you can send the contacts to a private email address or can set up an email account for your Shed using a free service such as Hotmail, Google or Yahoo. Make sure someone is committed to checking that email address if you do.

Other options are blog platforms such as wordpress or blogger.com

Social Media
Many people take part in social media and it is a good way of getting word out to people. The most common are Facebook and Twitter but there are many more out there such as Google+ and Instagram. If you are not familiar with social media then the best approach is to choose one and do it well rather than trying to spread yourself across a range of platforms,

The support hub have a good downloadable guide that includes help for beginners and top tips. www.supporthub.org.uk/resources/about-first-tweet-practical-guide-social-media

Mailing lists
Mailing lists don’t need to be complicated, Mailchimp for example is a free online service which allows you to send out messages electronically to people on a mailing list, you can collect the email addresses of people who are interested in your project and send out updates to them regularly so they know about all your activities and updates.
Word of mouth
One of the best forms of promotion is word of mouth, talk about your project with people you
know and encourage them to do the same. Make sure you have leaflets available to give to peo-
ples and key information like your web address, opening times etc.

Develop partnerships
One way to attract interest and new Shedders is to develop partnerships with other local groups.
This could be groups whose members might also be interested in being Shedders such as “in
Bloom” or Allotment groups, Rotary or Lions clubs or Hobby clubs or it might be groups who’s
beneficiaries might want to attend such as Age UK, RV5 and other health groups. Your local CVS
will be able to help you spread the word through their network or community groups.

Writing good copy
It is important that your promotional materials are easy to read and convey key information
clearly. You will need to have a clear idea of who your target audience is – for example are you
writing something that you want potential Shedders to pick up and pique their interest, are you
letting local health service professionals know about the Shed so they can refer people or are you
trying to sell products or attract donations. The way in which you communicate with these dif-
f erent audiences will be different and you will have to adapt.
Some key points to consider are:
• avoid jargon or acronyms – assume no knowledge of the reader
• keep you message short – no more than 250 words for a press release or 15 words for a
  sentence,
• put together a notes for editors spiel that can be attached to the end of press releases that
  contains background information for the journalist
• put yourself in the readers shoes
• spend time working on a headline or title – this is the first thing people read and it needs to
  hook your reader
• include a call to action and always ensure contact details are easy to find

When writing a leaflet consider these three steps
1. Identify why someone might come to the Shed and explain what in it for them
2. Answer any concerns they may have - I don’t have any skills is the Shed for me? I have lots
  of experience is the Shed for me? I’m over 65 can I come along?....
3. Tell them how, when and where

Don’t forget the pictures
Using pictures is a great way of communicating a message so if you have a Shedder who is good
with a camera then get them down to your Shed taking photos. People can relate to photos as it
helps them to picture themselves doing something.

Pictures of your building and a good map can also relieve any anxiety about finding where you
are.
Shedder CM attends the shed on Saturday sessions and occasionally on Wednesdays. He is currently receiving treatment for Cancer and will attend as often as his health allows. He sees health professionals on a fortnightly basis and this had previously been a barrier to him being involved with the community. His community involvement has increased as a result of part of the shed and he reports an increase in confidence. “I am recovering from Cancer, was stuck at home with no driving license currently and therefore was looking for things to do to keep my interest and morale up. The Shed seemed an ideal, way of getting me out of the house, giving me a chance to improve my woodwork skills and to meet new people, many who sadly have similar afflictions to mine. I am really glad that I joined and would recommend it to any man of almost any age.”

Shedder CM reports benefiting from the support received from individuals at the shed saying “I lost my father when I was young and therefore never had that fatherly input and advice, this has been replaced my several of the older gentleman at the Shed who have metaphorically put their arm around my shoulder and have helped me more than they will ever know.” Talking specifically about how the support has helped him to cope with his diagnosis and treatment for Cancer he says “I never realised how emotionally and physically draining the recovery from Cancer would be. My existing mental health issues have been exacerbated by the medication and concerns about what I am going to do with the rest of my life also occupy you. The Shed has saved me from needing a professional councillor and other mental health support services. You soon discover there that others have similar issues to you and that you are not alone nor are your problems unique. Having someone to share these issues with is so important”

I am certainly happier in my self and my depressive incidences are significantly lessened. Dealing with Cancer is a tough road to tread and the encouragement and best wishes of your fellow shedders go a long way to making the road easier to travel. I am so much better having things to do and woodwork is ideal for me as it taxes the mind without inducing too much fatigue in the body.

Shedder CM values the friendship that he has found at the shed higher than any of the other benefits he reports, in addition to supporting him he has also found support from Shedders to support his family, specifically his daughter “My family an I have been introduced to First Responders and has opened the door to a medical career that she wants by joining First Responders and moving on to become a Paramedic in time”
Shedder ST is in his early thirties and attends the shed on Saturday sessions as he has a full time job which keeps him busy during the week. He has been recently (within the last year) diagnosed with a mental health condition which has elements of compulsive behaviour including a long standing gambling addiction. This illness and addiction has meant that for the past decade he has had an unsettled lifestyle moving from various homes, at times being homeless, had hospital stays due to stress and self harm, and fed his addiction through crime. He is now in therapy for the mental health condition and in full time work but continues to battle with compulsive and negative thoughts.

When joining the shed Shedder ST rated his involvement with the community low at only two out of ten, over the past six months this has increased to seven and he no longer reports feeling lonely or isolated. Talking about his experience at the shed he says “The Shed has made me realise that everyone has a skill or something to give. On days when I feel useless I think about the friends I have made at the shed and it motivates me - when I miss a session I am missed and people ask where I am. This is the first time in a long time that I have felt that people care about how I am doing and want me to do well.”

“The best thing about the shed is that no one is judged”

Shedder ST reports that going to the Shed has had a direct affect on helping him manage his addiction “It has given me something to focus on, Saturdays used to be the big racing day for me and now I have something productive to do.”

Talking about the supervisors at the shed he says that they remind him of his Grandfather who died tragically at a young age. “I was brought up by my grandparents as my mum was young and couldn’t cope, I never knew who my father was and having lost both grandparents as a teenager it has been a long time since I had a positive role model. The support and encouragement from the supervisors helps keep me settled. This in turn helps keep me well. They have made me feel welcome from day one and encourage me: they show me how to plan projects and how to aim for something better.”

Shedder ST is now planning to share his love of fishing by organising a fishing trip for the group and is supporting them with fundraising by planning a quiz he says “I wanted to be more involved but thought I had no skills to offer, but the supervisors have encouraged me and we are now planning a quiz for a project I love and see as a key part of my recovery”
Shedder SK is a regular attendee of the shed having heard about the projects and initially been supported to attend by his family and a local mental health project. He is in his mid thirties and currently unable to work due to mental health issues. He has high levels of anxiety and depression that impact on his day to day life. Prior to going to the Shed Shedder SK has been supported to get involved with community activities but has shied away from being part of a group due to his anxiety. Despite these community activities when asked when joining the shed to rate his community activity he said three of ten. Six months after joining the shed this has now raised to a seven and he sees himself as much more involved than previously.

Shedder SK struggles with his confidence and says that attending the shed has helped him with this he says “I am very self-critical and I have been doing better than I expected I’ve made slow progress but I have achieved and learnt. One of the Shed supervisors has been supportive and helpful, we draw up designs. All the supervisors are supportive and easy to talk to, they give advice but also let me do my own thing”.

In addition he reports being more active during the week and also reports an improvement in physical fitness having bought a bike to enable himself to attend the shed independently. He joined the shed to learn new skills and this has helped him at home. “I made a bird box as a gift for my parents at Christmas and this is now up in their garden, I made a serving tray which is also being used at home and I have learned new skills which I can use to help out at home I have fixed a trellis and helped put up a shed.” Shedder SK reports that without his experience at the shed he would not have had the skills or the confidence to help out in this way, he simply says he would not have believed he could do it.

Overall he reports a sense of achievement from his experience in the shed, he still finds it difficult to be amongst people and will sometimes have to take breaks outside the shed but is increasingly feeling comfortable and more confident with the other shedders.
Appendix 1: Sample Health and Safety Policy Statement

*Shed name* is committed to protecting the health and safety of its Members, supervisors, volunteers and to the public when engaged in activities for and within the Shed. *Shed name* will comply with the terms of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and all applicable regulations made under the Act, 'so far as is reasonably practicable.'

*Shed name* has in place policy and procedures to achieve the following:
Provide the safest possible environment for Members, supervisors, visitors, contractors and any others who may be affected by our activities

Compliance with all relevant legislation and associated codes of practice;
- Minimisation of risks through risk assessment which is used to decide on priorities and to set objectives for managing hazards and reducing risks. Risks that cannot be eliminated are minimised by the use of physical controls or, as a last resort, through systems of work and personal protective equipment;
- Adequate information, instruction and training to meet all Member's needs;
- Assessment of the adequacy of health and safety policies/procedures through consultation with our Members;
- Reduce accidents and incidents to the lowest possible level;
- Requirements for all members, supervisors and contractors to work safely and with consideration for the health and safety of themselves and others.

*Shed name* requires its members and supervisors to:
- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions;
- Co-operate with *Shed name* and its officers on matters relating to health and safety by complying with procedures and instructions;
- Not knowingly act in such a way which may cause either themselves or *Shed name* to be in breach of the law or damage the reputation of the organisation;
- Correctly use any items of equipment, in accordance with training given and not interfere with; or misuse, any item of personal protective equipment provided;
- Attend general and task-related health and safety training as required;
- Inform the supervisor at the earliest opportunity, if during the course of their work, they are injured, become unwell or are involved in or become aware of any potentially unsafe situations.
- Inform the supervisor immediately if they become aware of any faults or damage to any tools or equipment which may lead to unsafe situations.
SHED MAINTENANCE/SAFETY CHECKS

Regular maintenance and safety checks help to maintain a safe working environment for within the Shed. The below checks should be carried out monthly/annually as needed and initaled when completed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly Checks</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual check of plugs and leads</strong></td>
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<td>Looking for potential risk e.g. worn cables, damage to plug or electrical</td>
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<td>equipment casings, unsafe connections,</td>
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<td><strong>Smoke Alarms in working order</strong></td>
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<td>Check battery working by pressing test button. Vacuum and wipe the smoke</td>
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<td>alarm casing to ensure dust isn’t blocking the sensor chamber</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Visual check of power tools</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Check for build up for dust and dirt and vacuum as needed</td>
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<td>Check safety guards and features are in good condition</td>
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<td>Lubricate moving parts as per manufacturers guidance</td>
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<td><strong>Check Dust extraction</strong></td>
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<td>Check filter for build up of dust and debris</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Checks</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sep</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fire extinguisher servicing</strong></td>
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<td><strong>PAT test</strong></td>
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<td>Change smoke alarm battery</td>
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</table>
### Activity: Using Machinery and power tools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazards</th>
<th>Moving parts of machines and ejected materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons at Risk</td>
<td>Members, supervisors and Shed visitors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Assessment</th>
<th>Members risk serious injuries from contact with moving parts of machinery, particularly saw blades or from being hit by ejected material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control Measures</td>
<td>Where necessary machines are braked and fitted with safety features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All machines are guarded according to manufacturers’ instructions. Guards are regularly inspected and maintained to make sure they remain in good condition</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Members are provided with protection appliances, such as jigs, holders and push sticks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Members have sufficient space to work safely at the machines</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supervisor checks that members always use the guards</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All members and supervisors are trained how to use the machines safely and competently and signed off to authorise use.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Further Control Measures**

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Identify all necessary PPE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eye / Face</th>
<th>Hand / Arm</th>
<th>Feet / Legs</th>
<th>Respiratory</th>
<th>Other (Specify)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body (clothing)</th>
<th>Hearing</th>
<th>Other (Specify)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
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</table>

Specify the grade(s) of PPE to be worn: *Must be CE marked in accordance with Directive 89/686/EEC - personal protective equipment*

Specify when during the activity the item(s) of PPE must be worn: *When appropriate to the machine being used, as per training and induction procedures*

**Engineering controls**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guarding</th>
<th>Extraction</th>
<th>Interlocks</th>
<th>Enclosure</th>
<th>PAT Testing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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Other relevant information (incl. testing frequency if appropriate):

Signed: _________________________________________________
Date: ___________________________________________________
Review date: ____________________________________________
In order to comply with our principles of social responsibility and health and safety it is necessary for each new participant to be taken through our Induction Process and formally acknowledge having been advised of the following:

- The Code of Conduct that applies to this Shed project.
- The Safety, Health and Welfare conditions as applicable to this Shed project.
- The specific working practices that have been put in place in order to ensure safe enjoyment of the facilities.

The Induction process will include

- Walk round of facilities
- Confirmation of understanding of the Code of Conduct
- Health & Safety briefing
- Instructions on use of relevant tools
- Signing of Induction Confirmation
- Discussion of any health issues or medications (and their side effects) that may impact on usage of tools (specific risk assessments may be carried out on individuals as needed)

**Name**

I confirm having been shown and talked through the Code of Conduct that applies to the Shed. I understand it and confirm that I will comply with the terms at all times. I also understand that non-compliance with any part will result in my being asked to leave the session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signed by Participant</th>
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<tr>
<th>Signed by Supervisor</th>
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I confirm having been shown and talked through the Safety, Health and Welfare documents that are in use on the Shed. I understand them and confirm that I will comply with the terms at all times.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signed by Participant</th>
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<table>
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<th>Signed by Supervisor</th>
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</table>
This second page of the Induction Confirmation Form is an ‘ongoing’ document and will be signed ‘as and when’ and kept in the designated folder at the Shed.

I confirm having been shown and talked through the Usage Instructions for each of the tools listed below that are available for use on the Shed. I understand them and confirm that I will ensure my use of those tools is strictly in accordance with the Usage instructions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Signed by Participant</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Signed by Supervisor</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Lathe</td>
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**Induction checklist – Bench Grinder**
The Induction into safe use of the Bench Grinder should cover:

- Use of angle adjustment and plastic safety shields
- Fast revolving wheel that can eject items at fast speeds
- Revolving wheel will run on after switching off
- Use of eye protection equipment
- MUST NOT use gloves
- Supervisor to change wheels
- General workshop safety including turning off at the machine before the wall, tying back loose clothing and/or long hair....

**Induction checklist – Pillar Drill**
The Induction into safe use of the Pillar Drill should cover:

- Locking the base plant into position
- Ensuring the guard is in situ and demonstrating it can be lowered if needed
- Ensuring the Drill bit is in central position/ using the chuck key
- Awareness of different speed settings for different materials (supervisor to change)
- Use of the depth stop adjuster
- Use of eye protection when drilling metal (optional use when drilling wood)
- Use of dust mask is optional
- General workshop safety including turning off at the machine before the wall, tying back loose clothing and/or long hair....

**Induction checklist – Scroll Saw**
The Induction into safe use of the Scroll Saw should cover:

- Use of different blades
- Movement of machine during use
- Variable speed settings
- Awareness of positioning nozzles to clear dust
- Awareness of the tilted base plate
- Positioning of the guard to allow for different material sizes
- Use of dust mask
- Awareness that blade can be changed if broken or unsuitable
- General workshop safety including turning off at the machine before the wall, tying back loose clothing and/or long hair....
USE OF BENCH GRINDER

Only authorised persons to use equipment after appropriate training.

Tie up loose clothing and long hair securely whilst using the machine.

Use work rest as necessary.

Keep hands clear of the grinding wheel during use.

Use correct type of disc for the task.

Do not grind using the side of the wheel.

Guard to be used.

Eye protection should be worn.

Turn off on the machine not on the wall.

If equipment is faulty in any way DO NOT USE. Report the fault to Shed Co-ordinator and place DO NOT USE notice on the item.