

Men in Sheds MK

Chairs Report – AGM 24th May 2017

5th Birthday Celebration

Last March saw the Shed achieve its 5th birthday. For much of that time we have been resident in Unit 30 Kiln Farm, at the start a barn of a place that we have gradually filled. The Shed has come some way from only having borrowed space, courtesy of the Christian Foundation, and a membership fee of £1 per week.

We numbered 20 -30 members in those days. This stood at 100 at the end of last year. What with personal circumstances changing, moving away from the area or failing health, some of these have faded away. Membership currently stands again close to 100 and continues to rise. The finances of the Shed have similarly held up, more members donating to the running of the Shed by direct debit through Local Giving. In large measure, the Shed remains self-sufficient through these donations. Thanks to all.

The most notable loss we suffered was earlier this year with the passing of Ken Ranns. Ken was a no nonsense fella, said it as it was. He imbued the Shed with his passion for model railways and brought humour and energy to the Shed. He will be missed.

Despite these losses we continue to attract new members and to fulfil our mission to support the wellbeing of men. The range of activities in the Shed has also expanded, thanks in main to the Makerspace section with their passion in all things electronic. With their nocturnal operation, Mondays and Wednesdays see the Shed open from before 10 in the morning though to late hours of the evening.

This year we hope to see us have “a home of our own”. Age UK MK have graciously hosted us in Unit 30. Last year we had looked to take on the lease of Unit 30 in our name, but progress has been slow. It should happen this year. This will bring extra responsibilities, with yet more from our insurers in the safe operation of the Shed, but we are confident the Sheddors will assume these responsibilities as they have increasing so done to date. We will then look to make significant investment in the Shed, especially on better heating.

Accrediting members in safe use of the machine tools continues to be demanding. Andrew has for long been the mainstay of this process. This month saw us start the process of spreading this responsibility. A professional training company have been engaged to see that others in the Shed will help with the accreditation process. Shed safety has also been improved through extensive first aid training.

The Shed continues to attract a steady stream of those who want to set up new Sheds. I believe we can claim credit for helping the West Bletchley Shed get off the ground, along with Northampton and start-ups in Coffee Hall and Dunstable. We look forward to helping more start-ups this year. There is also a similar continuing call from the community to help them with projects.

Finally, thanks must go to those who make a special contribution to keeping the Shed going. Les for his tight grip on finance, Nigel Pigott as a diligent Secretary, and the trustees. Then there's Mark (Rasher), David Towell, Mark Sadler, Big David and Bernie for keeping the place spick and span, Dave for seeing we don't run out of milk, Dave Lewis for filling in for Ken, Dennis for fire protection duties, and Dick for organising the first aid training, plus an army of others I've failed to mention.

Thanks,



Peter Gallagher, Chair Men in Sheds MK