

Incorporating the MK Makerspace

Welcome to the August Newsletter

Over the last few months we have continued to welcome a steady influx of new members (see sidebar). It's also good to see Ron Bowles fully in harness as our new Chairman (and resident lawnmower engineer) and he has already been active in a number of areas concerning Shed safety, security and income generation. In the last few weeks we have heard that new Committee member Ricky Briggs has to undergo an extended period of medical treatment and is unlikely to be able to attend the Shed for a while. We wish him well and hope to see him back in the Shed before too long.

Stan Green

We reported in the last newsletter that Stan Green had been hospitalised following a stroke. Sadly Stan did not recover and after a lengthy stay there he died in Milton Keynes University Hospital on 24 June. Stan was a longstanding member of the Shed and as well as a well-liked member of the social group. His meticulous craftsmanship in both wood and metal was admired by all who saw him at work in the Shed. he was a source of much wisdom concerning techniques and was also ready with friendly advice to anyone whom he felt might be endangering themselves or others through unsafe working practices. Stan's funeral was attended by a group of his Shed colleagues and £130 was raised by the Shed and donated to Willen Hospice in Stan's

memory. He was one of the Shed's elder statesmen and will be much missed.

New Shed website

The new Shed website built by John Orme, with contributions from Nigel Pigott and photos by Alessandro Pontillo is nearing completion. Although it has not yet been publicly launched it can be found at <https://www.meninshedsmk.org/wordpress/>. Comments on the developing site, to john.orme@meninshedsmk.org.uk are most welcome.

Shed Improvements

Changes to the Shed to make it a better place to work and play have continued over the summer months.

The long-awaited improvements to the draught-proofing of the large roller door have at last been done and this should make the workshop a more comfortable place to be this winter. We have also commissioned a survey of the decommissioned wet heating system but sadly this has led to the conclusion that the cost of re-commissioning or replacing the system would be prohibitive. We are therefore left with the options of continuing with the current electric heating - perhaps with some modifications to improve economy, or installing a new combi-boiler-based system. The Committee will be reviewing these options in the coming weeks.

We are fortunate in that Michael West has been able to obtain some surplus-to-requirements PCs from his employer and these will be installed shortly. They should be a great improvement in terms of speed and functionality to the ancient machines currently in the office and social area.

Following his generous donation of a defibrillator Dave Sawyer has added to the Shed's health-related provision by donating a blood pressure monitor. We have also, on Dave's advice, upgraded the first aid kit.

Two additional CCTV cameras have been installed in the workshop to enhance security and safety.

The electronic logging in system is a little nearer to introduction but please continue to use the manual system until the new fobs have been programmed and distributed. We are aware that some Shedders appear to think that they can come and go as they please, without the need to sign in and out. Please do not do this; If you are in the Shed without checking in you are uninsured and at risk in the event of a fire. Remember that when you enter the Shed you are on CCTV so Big Brother is watching you!

Regional Shed Network

.The Regional Shed Network met for the second time at the MK Shed in June and was attended by Shedders from as far afield as Amersham. Discussion focused on Shed sustainability and there was much sharing of experience. If one thing emerged it was the great diversity among Sheds in their premises, their activities and the ways in which they attract community support.

Machine training and accreditation

We are continuing to use the Classmarker system for machine accreditation and a number of Shedders have already succeeded in achieving accreditation on a range of woodworking machines. We will roll this out across the Shed and extend it to metalworking machines as demand requires. We have now lined up a group of experienced Shedders who have volunteered to be demonstrators and who will assess the competence of others who have

successfully completed the relevant online Classmarker tests.

If you are new to the Shed and want to obtain accreditation to use any machines, please speak in the first instance to Dave Tilley (normally to be found in the woodwork shop) or a Committee member.

Community Projects

It is part of the Shed's remit to contribute to the well-being of the community and not just that of its own members. The Shed has recently delivered several bird boxes, including an owl box and an insect hotel to Bradwell Abbey City Discovery Centre (all made by Dave Tilley) and Bernie Golds has completed the cold frames for Westbury Farm Permaculture project. Dave is currently working on a picnic table for the Buckingham Canal Society. A great collaboration between The Makerspace and the Shed led to Jim Morrison, John Weir and Dave Tilley devising an ingenious solution to the repair of an electric recliner chair mechanism. This involved both 3D printing and conventional machining. All of these projects have led to very satisfied customers and much-needed income for the Shed. Thanks are also due to Henry Suppiah for devising some admin procedures that will help us better manage individual projects.

The picnic table for the Buckingham Canal Society under construction

There are more community projects lined up for 2019 but committed volunteers are needed before we can take them on. If you are interested in working with other Sheddors on something worthwhile, please speak to a member of the Committee.

Paying our way and your way. Are you donating?

As you know, Men in Sheds MK, including the MK Makerspace, depends very largely on the donations made by its members to cover its running costs. The recommended level of donation is £15 a month for Men in Sheds and £20 a month for Makerspacers (to cover the extra investment required to equip the Makerspace workshop to the desired level).

Donations are voluntary and it is the Shed's policy that no-one should be excluded from membership for reasons of financial hardship. However, the Committee monitors donations regularly and is aware that a minority of members have made no or only very occasional donations to the Shed for many months although it has not been informed of any particular instance of hardship.

This is therefore a serious request that if you value your membership of the Shed you consider making regular donations at the levels noted above. We strongly encourage you to do this via Local Giving at <https://localgiving.com/charity/mismk> as this enables the Shed to claim Gift Aid on your contributions.

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Contributions to future editions are most welcome

Our supporters include:
